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GERALDO RIVERA LAUGHS LAST by David Brock

DECEMBER 14, 1998

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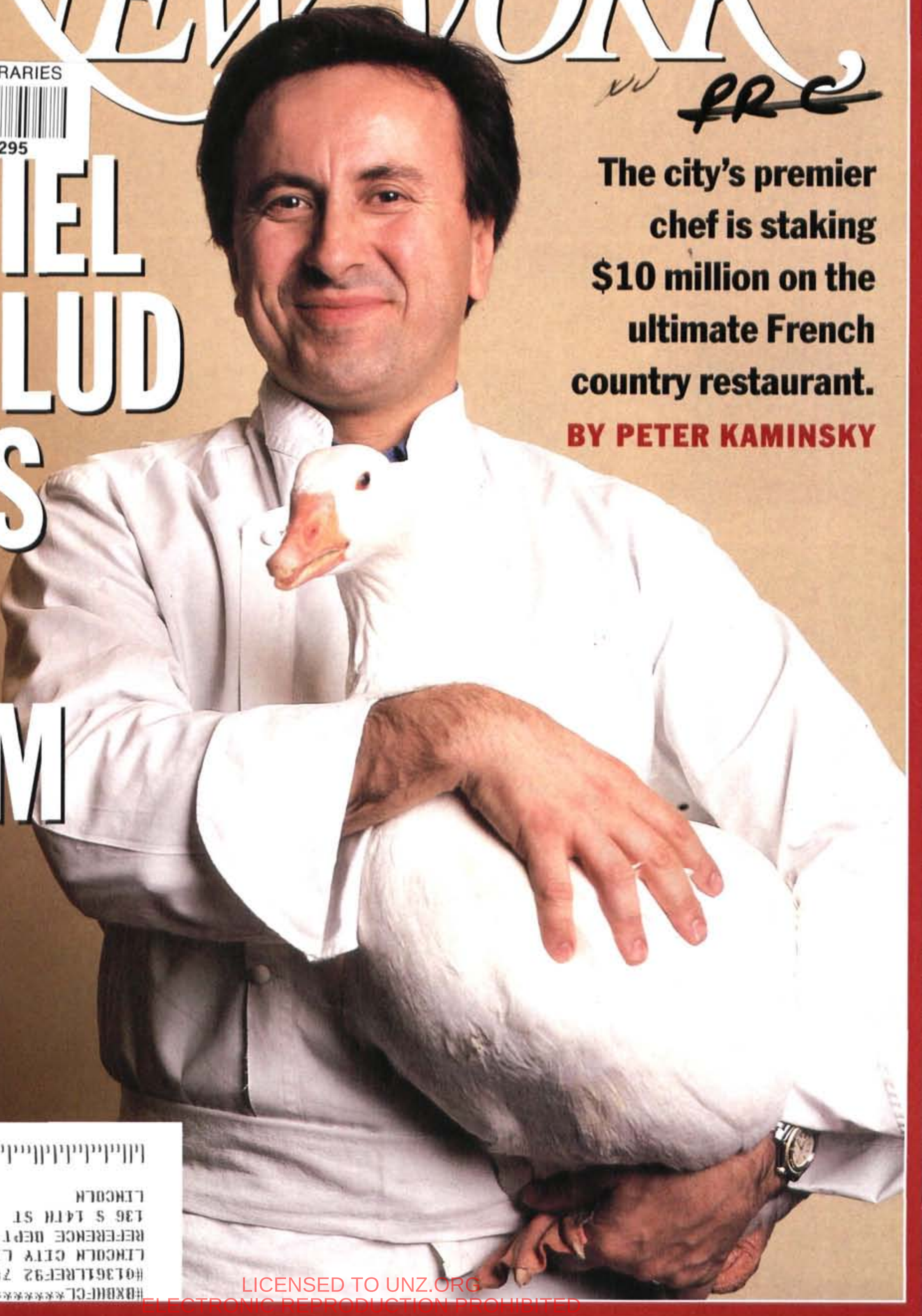
BY PETER KAMINSKY



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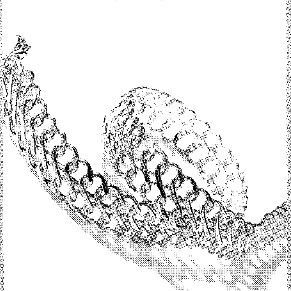
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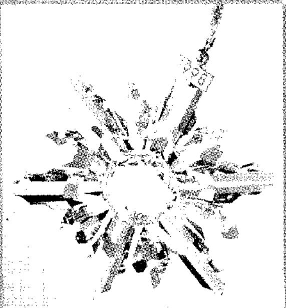
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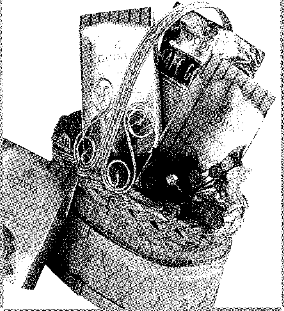
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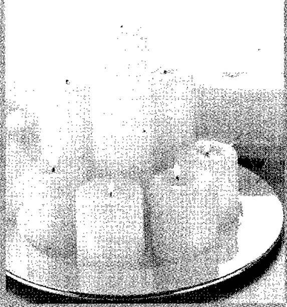
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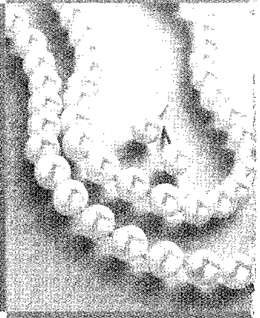
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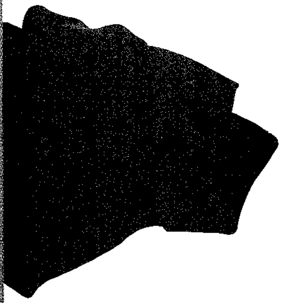
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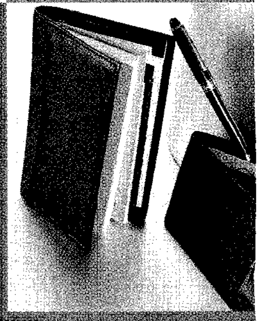
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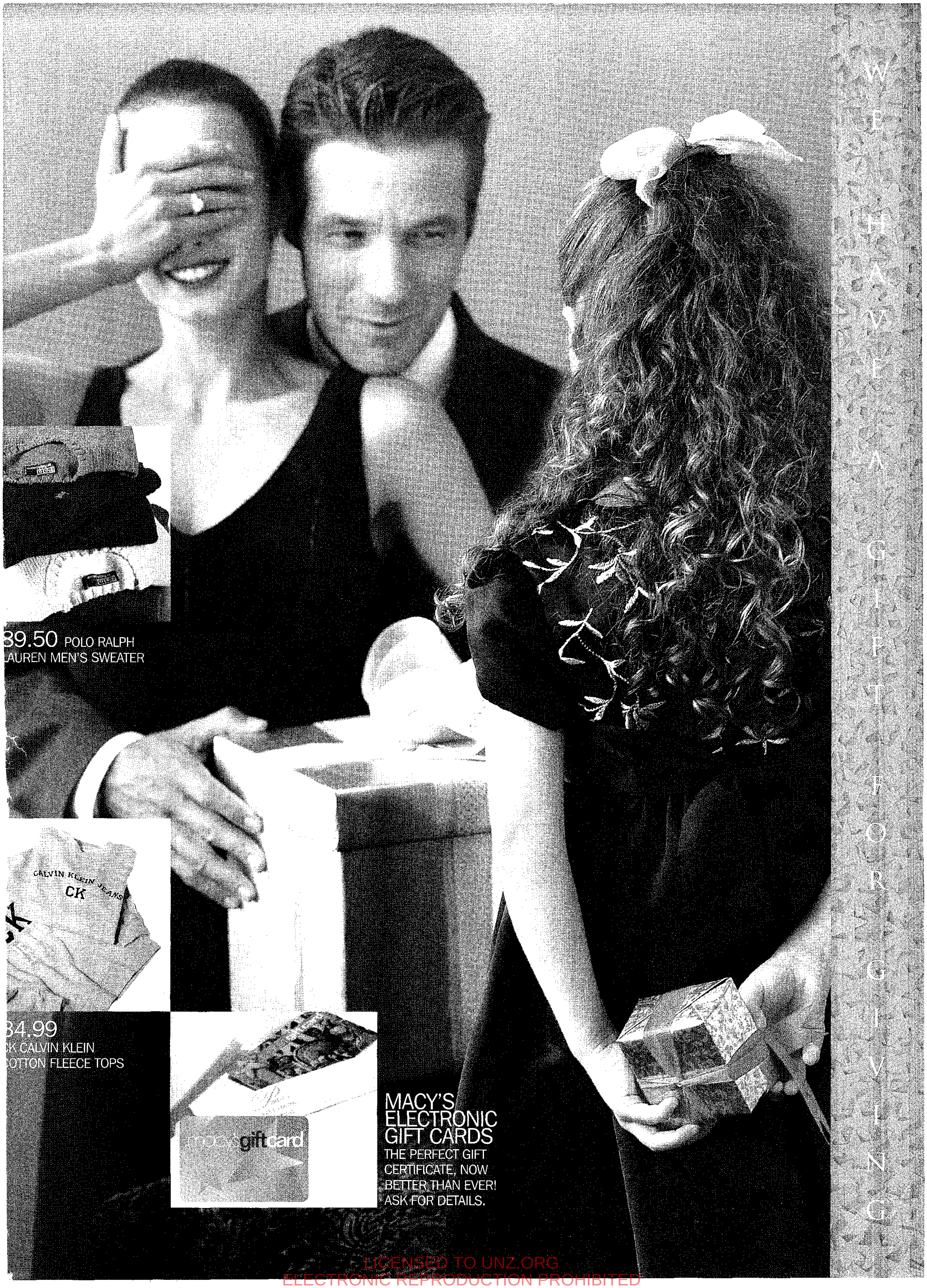
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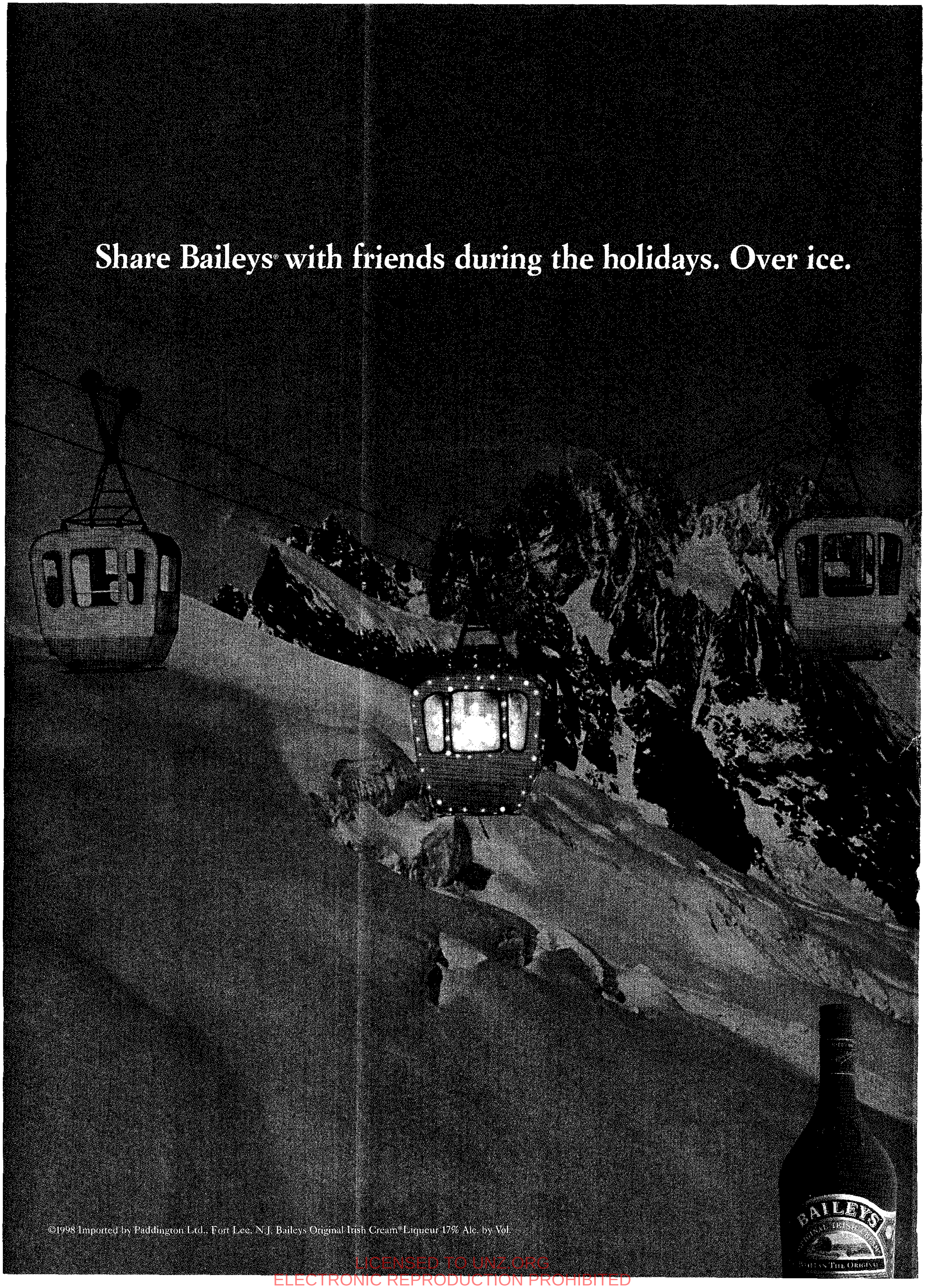
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>
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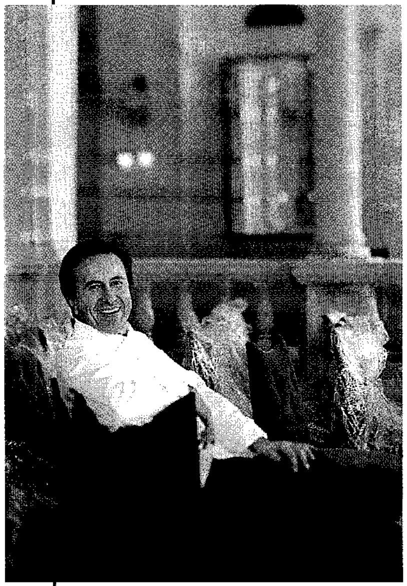

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By Peter Kaminsky

Daniel Boulud has owned four stars longer than any other chef in town. He has wooed and wowed the palates of presidents and foodies with an intense, flawlessly inventive cuisine that reflects both his provincial French upbringing and his training in some of France's greatest kitchens. Now he's opening a $10 million canteen in the Trumped-up Mayfair Hotel—where he'll serve what one admirer calls perfect peasant food.

34 Geraldo's Revenge

By David Brock

Bill Clinton's most unabashed booster broke news big-time with his CNBC coverage of Monicagate and made loyalists of lawyers and other Beltway obsessives. With an ever-expanding presence on NBC News programs, Geraldo's back—again!—whether Tom likes it or not.

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In *The Shallow Man*, Coerte v.w. Felske caught and caricatured the downtown world of model mating and barhopping he calls home. Can he do the same for Hollywood with his new novel, *Word*?

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Photographs: clockwise from top right, Steve Wisbauer; Evan Kafka; Michael Lavine; Mark Seelen.

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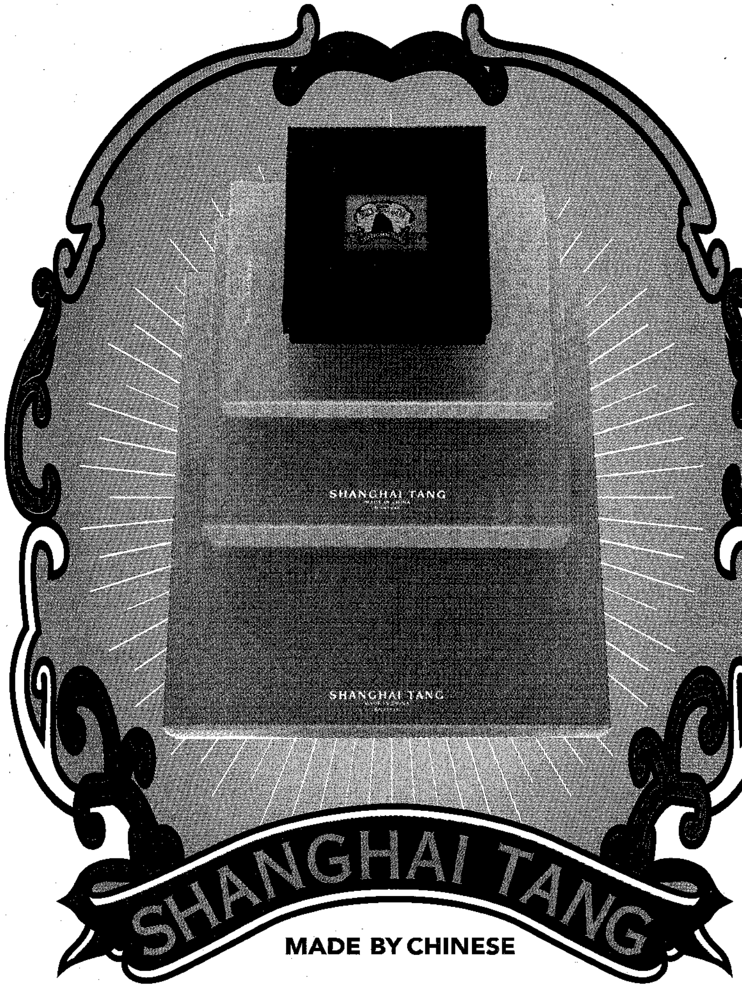

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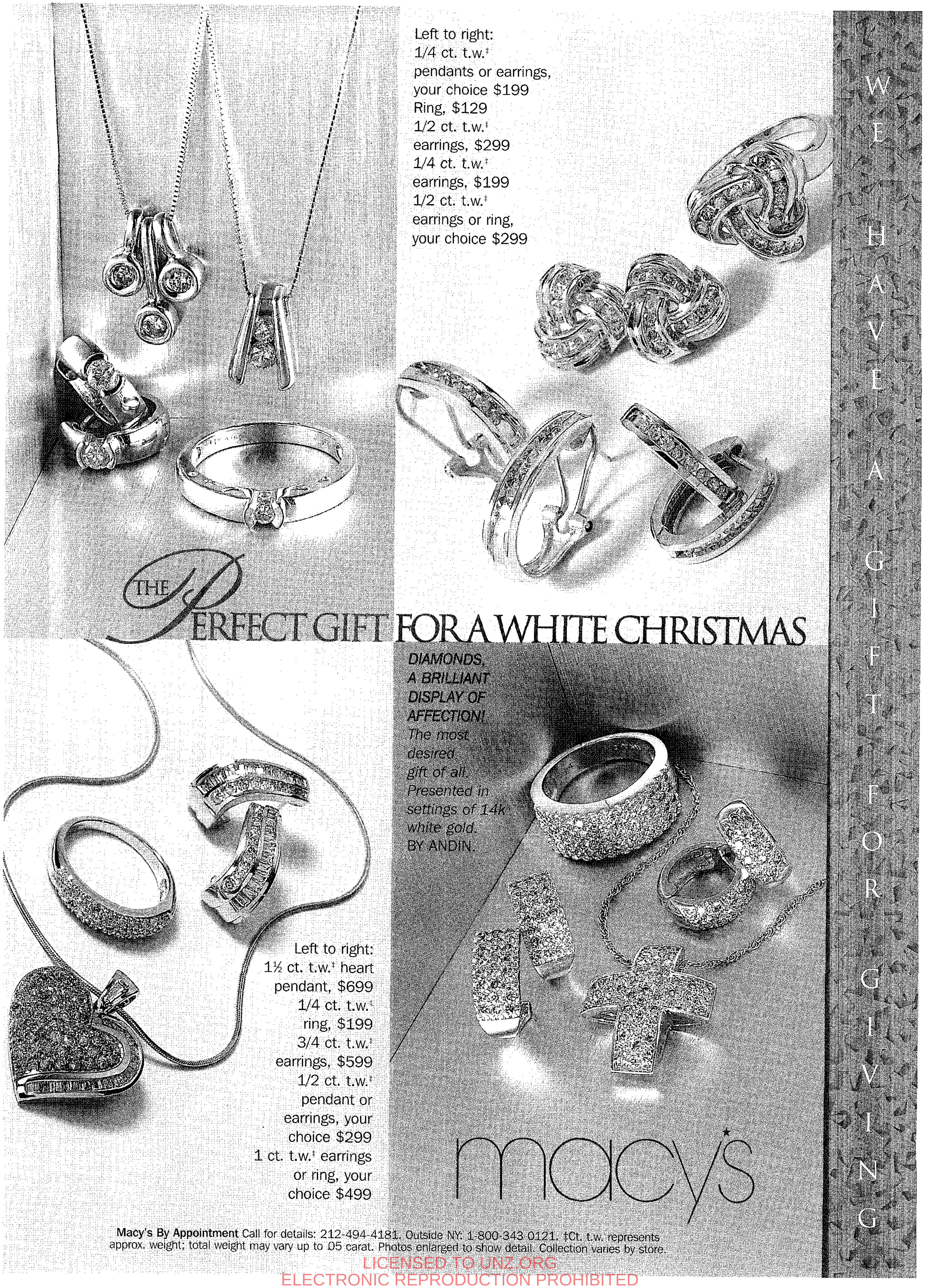

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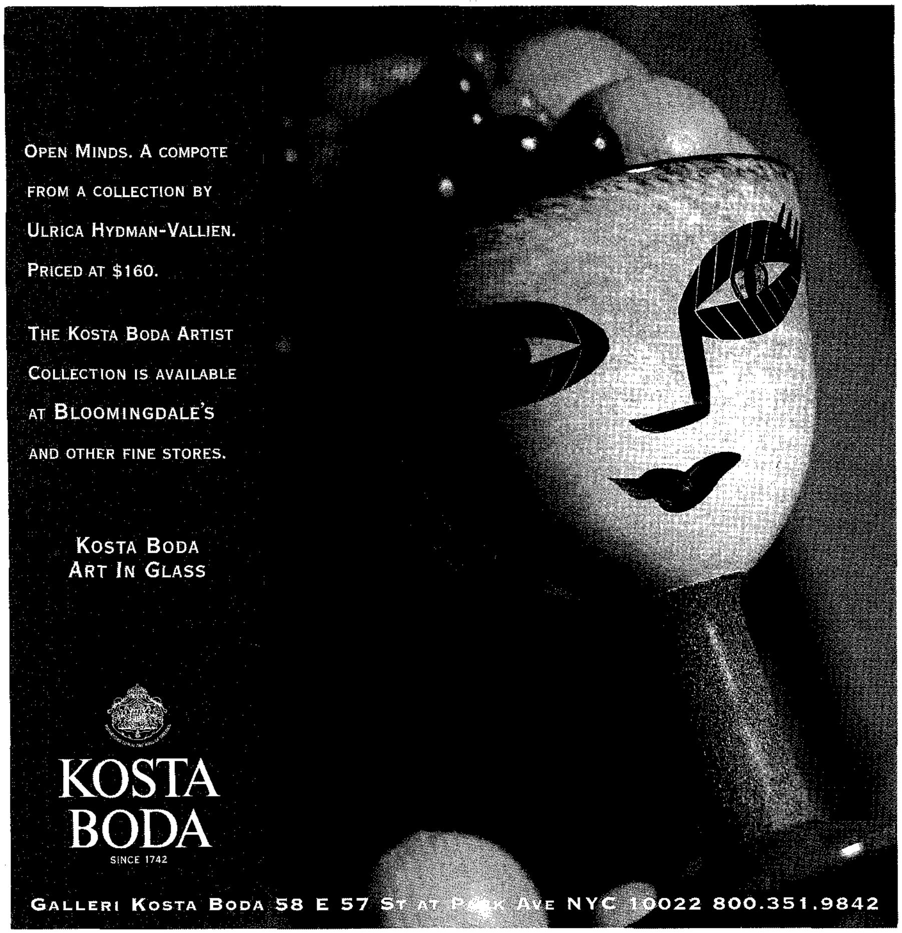
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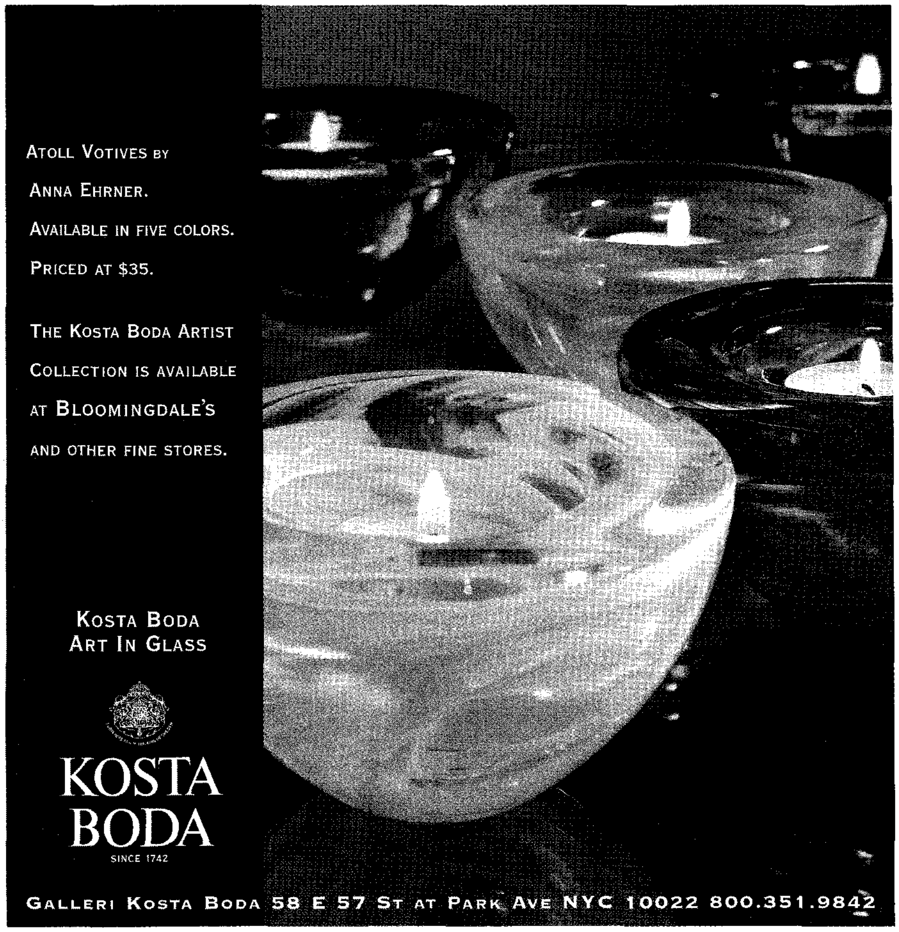
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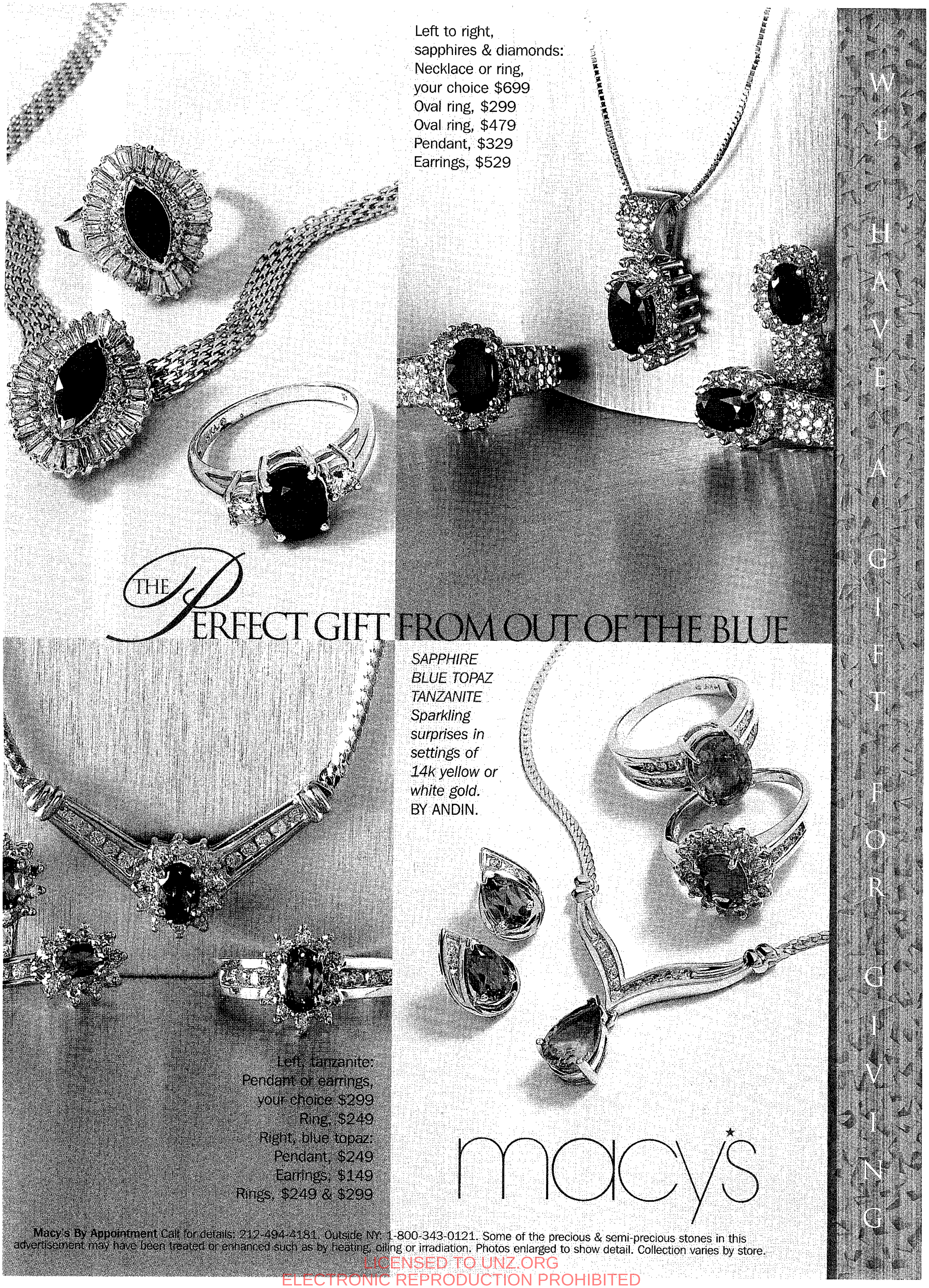

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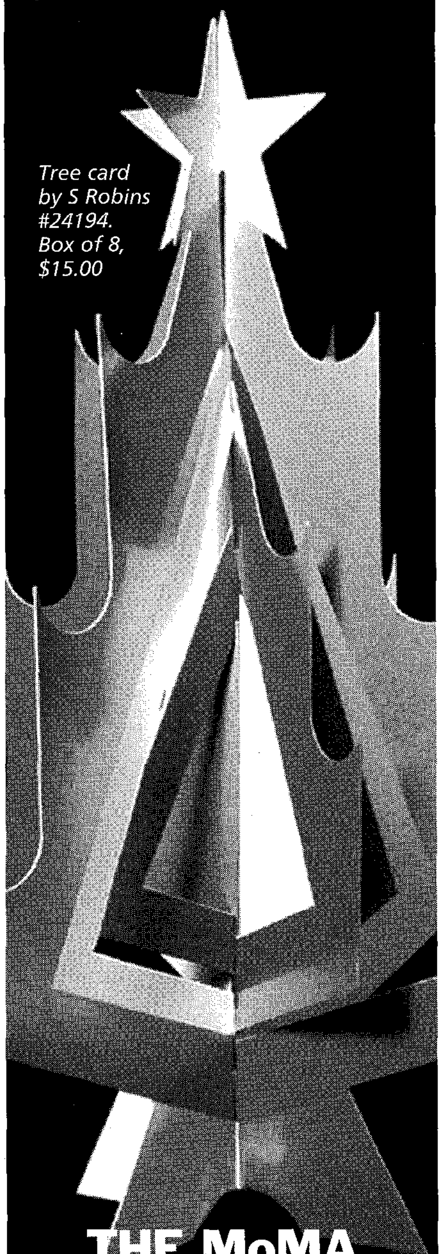

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LETTERS DECEMBER 14, 1998

Mediation

Impeachment (of the talking heads) can't start a moment too soon for news lovers; censorship on the buses.

CONGRATULATIONS ON HAVING THE guts to print the survey and critique about attitudes toward the media ["Impeach the Media," November 23]. Michael Tomasky's article was on target and brilliantly written, considering the volume of data he was conveying. So what do I see in my morning paper? Lewinsky and Tripp. What's on news-analysis shows? More of the same palaver. Give us a break! Please distribute Tomasky's article to all nationwide media ASAP.

Joe Da Rold
PLAINFIELD, N.J.

I REALLY ENJOYED YOUR ARTICLE ON THE media. All this year, I have been watching New York 1 for news. I know it won't ignore the Lewinsky scandal, but the amount of coverage will be barebones. Members of the media take themselves far too seriously. They think they are more important than our elected officials. Tim, Fred, Cokie, Sam, Peter, Ted, Dan, et al. certainly get more airtime than most officials. I wish these people would realize they have not been elected national scolds. But you have to sympathize—what did they have to cover for the past year? Social Security is boring.

Robert E. Carr
THE BRONX

I'M A CANADIAN WHO'S BEEN CLOSELY following the Clinton-Lewinsky story since it broke. The elitism, paternalism, and cynicism of CNN and the New York *Times* drove me to the Internet in search of some alternative American journalism. Fortunately, there are all kinds of alternatives there—progressive, socialist, radical, liberal, and, yes, nutzoid too. But it's wonderful to have all those perspectives on an issue when you're studying it from such geographic distance. I only wish I'd surfed *New York* Magazine earlier in my desperate search. But better late than never. I really appreciate Michael Tomasky's pieces on the mainstream press—especially this last piece. Tell him that if he ever relocates, I'd welcome him in Saskatoon.

D. Relke
SASKATOON, SASK.

I LOVED THIS WEEK'S ISSUE ON THE MEDIA. I could have written the piece myself. After listening to Cokie Roberts's endless preaching, I was disappointed only that you did not out this group of hypocrites one by one: Cokie gives speeches to special-interest groups at $30,000 a pop, and Sally Quinn (Monica without the beret) has been a home wrecker.

M. Bateman
MANHATTAN

ONE QUESTION YOUR POLLSTERS DIDN'T ask is "Where are Americans turning to get their news and information?" Network and local ratings numbers are down across the board, but especially in news. News junkies find better and more in-depth coverage on cable networks like MSNBC, CNBC, and CNN. Even sports freaks, who five years ago had to watch the local newscast for coverage of their teams—and would thus ingest the news by accident—now turn to national and regional sports networks so that they never need watch a traditional newscast again. Jay Leno has become America's favorite anchor, while the Donaldsons, Robertses, and Wills just fade away.

Josh Mora
WEST SENECA, N.Y.

MICHAEL TOMASKY'S PIECE LAMENTS A loss of public respect for journalism. I submit that the public hasn't lost respect for journalism; it just hasn't seen much lately. After a reference to Sally Quinn's sex life, Tomasky writes, "That's her business, of course. The public's business is whether we do our jobs in a responsible and civic manner." I suggest that the public feels the same way about Mr. Clinton, and is indifferent to, or disgusted by, political coverage that has so little to do with politics. Journalism worthy of public respect would cover the politics that directly affects people's lives instead of making priggish judgments about the peccadilloes of our public fig-

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ures. I'd like to recycle a bumper sticker from 30 years ago—"What if they gave a House Judiciary Committee meeting and nobody came?"

John Mooney
MANHATTAN

BOY, YOU REALLY KNOW HOW TO PUNISH media limelighters! Not only did you urge "Off With Their Talking Heads," but your caption writers completely ignored Tim Russert in identifying the caricatured media heavyweights. That *is* Russert standing between Ted Koppel and Cokie Roberts, isn't it?

A. T. Palmer
LAKE FOREST, ILL.

Equal Protection

I APPLAUD NINA BURLEIGH'S NOVEMBER 23 article "Pro-Choice Counterstrike," describing the Pro-Choice Public Education Project's ongoing struggle to get its ads on New York City buses. With Dr. Barnett Slepian's murder still fresh on the minds of New Yorkers, this is a great opportunity for the state of New York to take the lead and provide a nonviolent forum for expressing ideas about reproductive-health policies. Instead, the pro-choice community is silenced by bureaucratic stalling tactics. New York State should represent the interests of its citizens, not cave in to a narrowly supported, violent and criminal pro-life agenda.

Marie C. Wilson
President, Ms. Foundation
MANHATTAN

WE CANNOT CALL PEOPLE NAMES JUST BEcause they disagree with us. I find PEP's ads insulting, as the copywriters seem to think that it is only men who aren't pro-choice. I am a young woman with children, and I am sad that we do not give protection to the most innocent, the unborn. Under the misguided disguise of "women's choice," we have made abortion available for anyone, at any time, in any place, and for any reason. To consider this a woman's issue is really silly; after all, every aborted child has a father somewhere. Giving birth is a wonderful experience. Frankly, I think men are missing out.

Doris Darvasi
VANCOUVER, B.C.

Correction The caption accompanying Peter Davis's review of Luciano Pavarotti ("Classical Music: A Not-So-Furtive Tear," December 7) misidentified the women on either side of the tenor. They were Suzanne Laurence and Yvonne Gonzales. ■

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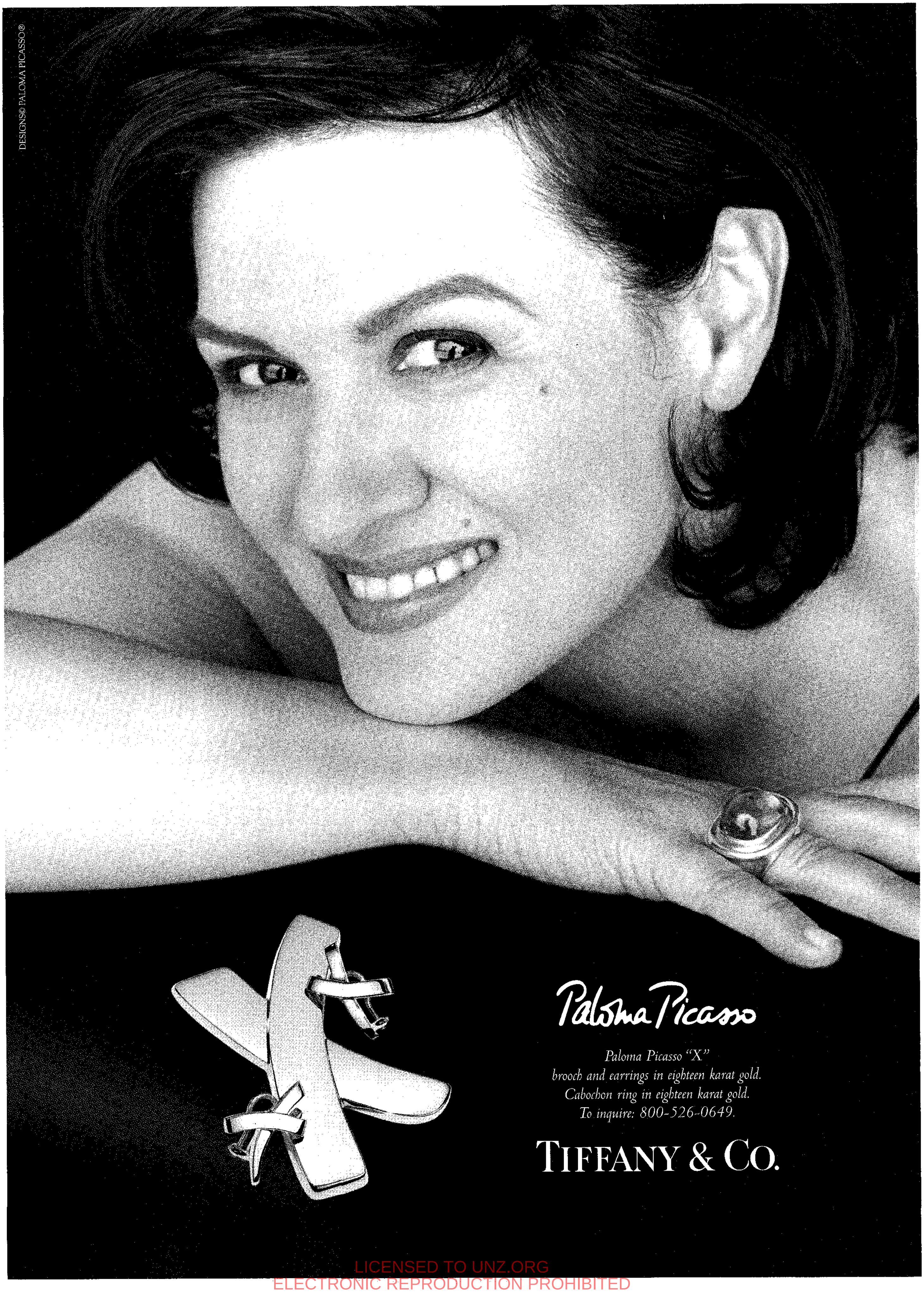

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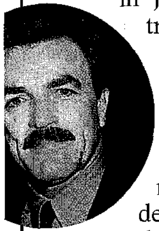


Who *wouldn't* want to be **Tom Selleck**'s lawyer? The litigious actor is getting the unauthorized-bio treatment—St. Martin's Press plans to distribute **Larry Manetti**'s *Aloha Magnum* in January—which is translating into billable hours for Selleck's lucky L.A. lawyer, **John Lavely**. After hearing from Lavely, Manetti's publisher deleted a paragraph in the 272-page book, evidently agreeing with the lawyer that there was "no factual basis" for the "idle speculation" about Selleck's friendship with **Burt Reynolds** and **Loni Anderson**. Uncorrected galley proofs had already been sent out to some editors, who were then bombarded with a four-page single-spaced letter from Lavely, complete with formal citations of nine previous libel and privacy cases, some of which had gone through several appeals that were duly noted by the meticulous attorney. "We were trying to spell it out in some detail, so people were aware that it wasn't just some flippant position that was being taken but rather was a thought-out position," Lavely explains, adding that he doesn't remember exactly how many billable hours went into the letter's composition, but that it was "enough time."

BLOOMBERG SEEKS PROMOTION

What self-respecting media baron would do anything that might invite comparisons between himself and such nineties punch lines as Steve Forbes and Ross Perot? **Michael Bloomberg**, who, according to a source, has been musing about adding the presidency to his long list of acquisitions. Bloomberg has been telling friends that his self-named PC-based subscription news service is raking in $100 million a month, and now he's thinking of using that cash to get himself *officially* named the most powerful man in the world, says the source. A spokesperson for Bloomberg says that 106,266 subscriptions do indeed bag more than $1 billion a year in revenues but denies that Bloomberg has any presidential aspirations. Considering what fun **Bill Clinton**'s been having lately, the newly single tycoon might be better off keeping his money in his pants.

NOT-SO-SUITE ENTRY FOR W GUESTS

The newly unveiled W New York bills itself as an urban oasis, but some guests might not agree. When the hotel held its opening-night party last week, guests who had reserved rooms months before and dared to follow **Cindy Crawford**, **Donald Trump**, **Michael Ovitz**, and **Martha Stewart** into the main entrance were rebuffed. Joan Smith from Virginia returned from the *1998 Radio City Christmas Spectacular* with her friends only to be told that the lobby, lounge, and restaurant were closed for a private party and that they would have to leave and re-enter the hotel through the back entrance. A W spokesperson admits that guests were not invited to the party—but says that anyone who "expressed concern" was to be let in at once. Furthermore, the guest entrance was "definitely not a back door. It was a groovy, creative little door" facing the same side of the street. Still, the hotel management must have sensed that something was awry—why else did W greet guests with conciliatory "amenity packages" filled with handmade chocolates and champagne and appease nondiscount guests with a complimentary stay? Maybe when—*if*—they return, the hotel will be less starstruck.

RAQUEL'S SLICE OF DOMESTIC LIFE

Looks like **Raquel Welch** has gone all pie-eyed. The ageless sex symbol will soon wed **Richie Palmer**, a Bronx-born restaurateur whose Beverly Hills–based Mulberry Street Pizzerias serve New York–style slices to homesick Hollywood stars like **Sly Stallone**, **John Travolta**, **Joe Pesci**, **Christina Ricci**, and **Stephen Dorff**. The happy couple—along with **Jack Nicholson** pal **Alan Finkelstein** of the Monkey Bar and Indochine—plans to extend Palmer's pizza empire as far as the East Coast. This month, the expansion starts with two Richie's Neighborhood Pizzerias at the Irvine Spectrum mall and the Block in Orange, California, and on December 10, the saucy bride-to-be, with the help of pal **Penny Marshall**, will serve up pizza at the latter. As for the wedding, a date has yet to be decided, but perhaps the band should start rehearsing "That's Amore."

Raquel Welch: For Richie or poorer

LOVE'S IN STYLE AT THE *TIMES*

The newspaper of note might have to run a retraction of one of its own policies next month. In a move to prevent any possible conflicts of interest, the *Times*, which has famously employed many couples, last November instituted a rule that spouses and couples "may not report to one another or edit one another's work"—but it has just hired *Newsweek* senior writer **Rick Marin** to be a reporter for the style department, where his girlfriend, **Ilene Rosenzweig**, is a deputy editor. A *Times* spokesperson maintains that Marin will report directly to department head **John Montorio** and never to his sweetheart, though he may write articles for her "Sunday Styles" section that she will not edit. "No matter what they say, he's going to end up reporting to his girlfriend," says one source at the *Times*, adding, "What if

Photographs: left, Henry McGee/Globe; right, Gregory Pace/Sygma.

Dolce & Gabbana: Resort to pilfering

D&G RUNWAY WITH LA SAMANNA STAFFER

Domenico Dolce and **Stefano Gabbana** sure know when to seize an opportunity—or an employee. While on a recent holiday on St. Martin, the designing duo became enamored of a butler at the luxury resort La Samanna. The fastidious chap unpacked their luggage, brought chilled towels to the beach, and offered refreshing sorbet with such style that the pair hired him away to serve in their own empire. "Most people only steal the robes," quips one hotel insider. Perhaps the designers thought those a bit last-season. Dolce & Gabbana could not be reached for comment.

they break up?" "We're not married," says Marin, "we don't live together, and she isn't my editor. So there won't be any impropriety or weirdness." Says another *Times* source, "It's certainly not the first time we've had this kind of situation."

THE NEW SCHOOL OF HARD KNOCKS

The case sure sounded juicy. Former New School for Social Research controller **Marina Vasarhelyi** sued the university and its president, **Jonathan Fanton**, after she was fired, charging "intentional infliction of emotional distress." The problem began when private notes Fanton wrote found their way into the hands of his staff, and the furious president hired a team of lawyers to investigate the leak. Vasarhelyi's lawsuit claims that the investigation quickly zeroed in on her and that she suffered a series of "hostile, abusive, and threatening" questionings. Judge **Franklin Weissberg**, who refused to dismiss the case on summary judgment last spring, wrote that Vasarhelyi's complaint suggested "an extremely abusive investigation and interrogation in which she was improperly asked about her marriage, threatened by the supposedly looming presence of the FBI, and subjected by a private attorney acting as a quasi-prosecutor to a heavy-handed line of questioning intended to intimidate her into a confession." Two weeks after she stopped cooperating with the New School's lawyers, she was fired. The trial and her tribulations were cut short last Thursday, when both sides reached a confidential settlement.

WILL MOCA FLAVOR DIA'S FUTURE?

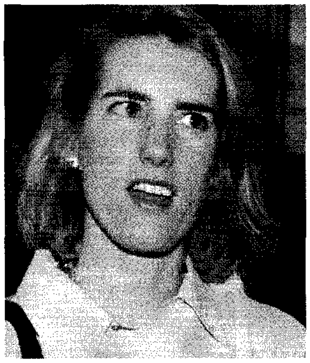
Michael Govan really is the **George Steinbrenner** of the art world. Like the boss who once wanted to move his team across the river, Dia's director has been threatening to relocate part of the art center's contemporary collection from Chelsea to Massachusetts. In a bid to wrest several million dollars out of state economic czar **Charles Gargano**, Govan has been dangling the prospect of a Dia outpost at the new Massachusetts Museum of Contemporary Art (MASS MOCA), says a source close to the talks. Govan helped develop MASS MOCA when he was employed by **Thomas Krens**, who fourteen years ago had the idea of turning an abandoned Berkshires factory into a museum. North Adams, Massachusetts, mayor **John Barrett** says he's had "discussions" with Dia. "I'd say they probably go back close to a year," he adds. "I don't know if [Govan's] been talking to others." A New York source calls the talks "a classic relocation threat," though a Massachusetts source insists that Govan does in fact prefer the Berkshires but faces a skeptical board. Govan says through a spokesperson that he's been to MASS MOCA and other sites "both inside and outside New York City" while searching for the "ideal space" for Dia's collection, but that he has made no decisions yet.

POACHED *POST*; LAURA STILL HOST?

THE PAPER CHASE: Blaine Harden has yet to begin work at the New York *Times*, but he's already whipping up passions in two newsrooms. Harden, who ran the New York bureau of the Washington *Post*, was also one of that paper's star correspondents, and managing editor **Steve Coll** led a futile effort to entice him to stay. The 46-year-old reporter left after 21 years at the *Post* because he was given a combo deal that guarantees him a few pieces a year in the *Times Magazine*, although he'll primarily be a metro reporter. Adding insult to injury in D.C. are memories of last spring. On April 28, Harden wrote a well-received story for the *Post* about the city's busiest public library, in Flushing, Queens—which many felt was slavishly copied by the *Times* on May 31. "That's the way we saw it, anyway," says **Edward Cody**, who runs the *Post*'s national bureaus. But *Times* metro editor **Joyce Purnick** insists she never saw Harden's earlier story. "I don't have the time to read every paper every day," says Purnick. "I've got to plead ignorance on that." She adds that she's "absolutely thrilled" to have Harden on board. "It's true that the *Post* tried very hard to keep me," says Harden, adding that the *Magazine* deal was "the sweetener" that made up his mind.

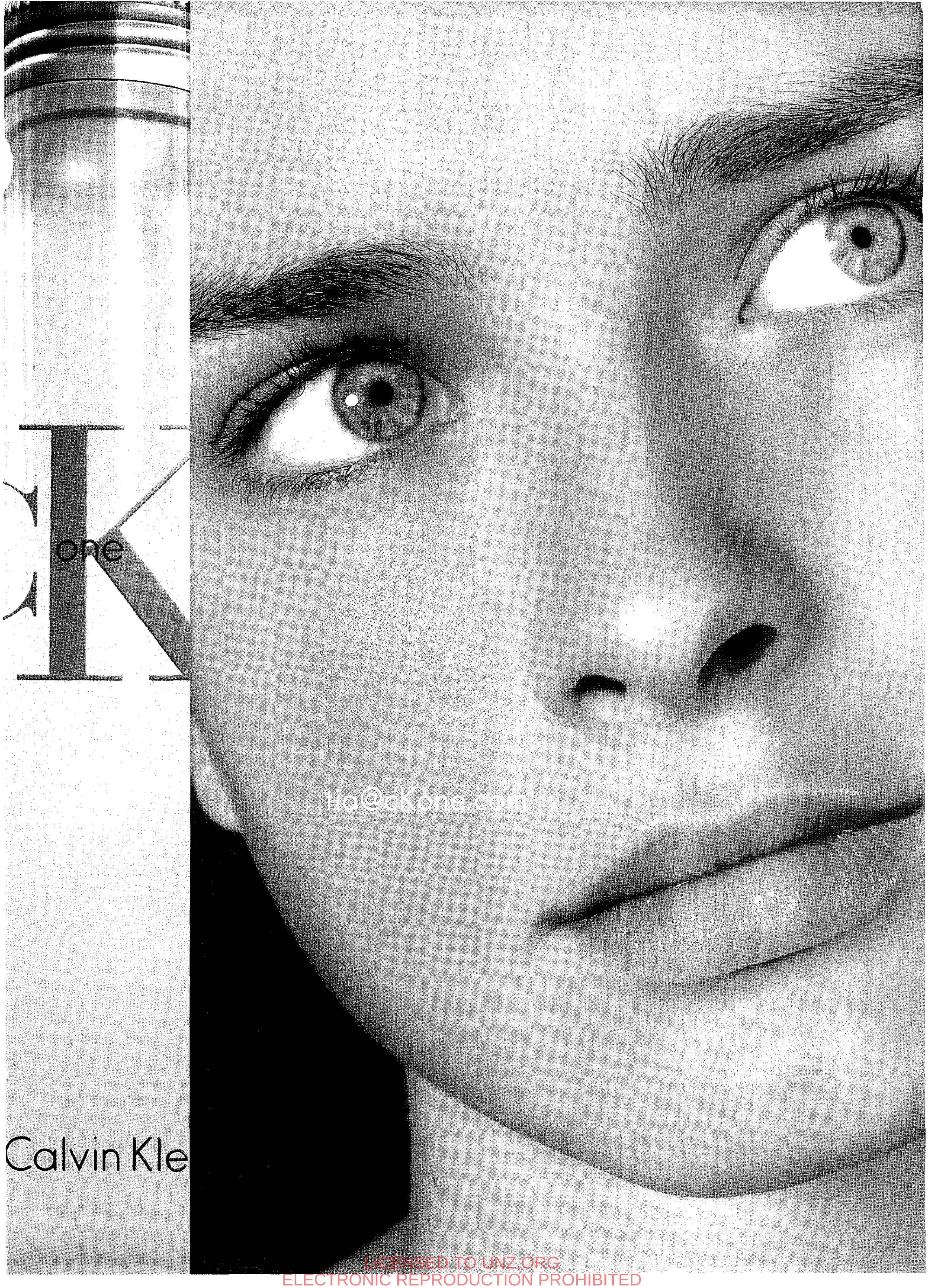
MSNBC'S FIRING LINE: How many times can this leopard change her spots? **Laura Ingraham**, the conservative info-babe famous for wearing a leopard-print miniskirt on the cover of *The New York Times Magazine*, landed a talk show, *Watch It*, at MSNBC after CBS let her go this past spring. Now comes word that her cable perch isn't secure, either. Ingraham was originally given the coveted 9 A.M. slot following **Don Imus**, but two weeks ago, her show was moved to 11 A.M. "She wasn't holding the Imus audience at all," reports one industry source. "She was unprepared technically for the job," says another source, who adds that Ingraham had a "rather rough start" that led to "trouble with the techies on the show." MSNBC is currently tinkering with its morning lineup, leaving some to wonder whether Ingraham will survive. "We do not comment on contracts, rumors, or speculation," says an MSNBC spokeswoman—and neither does Ingraham.

Additional reporting by Ian Spiegelman and Elana Zeide.



Laura Ingraham: Switching channels?

Photographs: top, Patrick McMullan/Gamma Liaison; bottom, Vivian Ronay/Gamma Liaison.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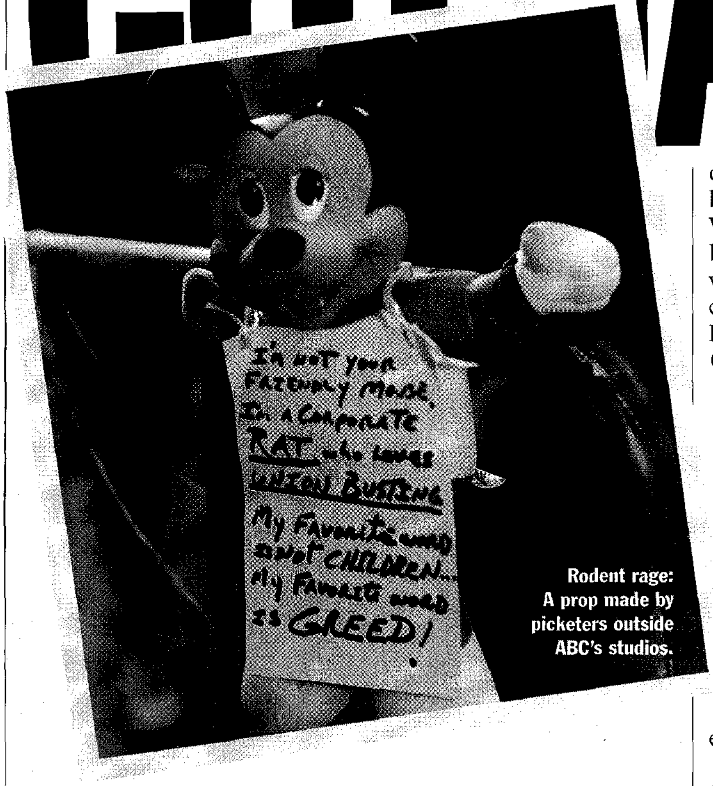


Rodent rage: A prop made by picketers outside ABC's studios.

Technical Difficulty

ABC grinds down its locked-out tech workers.

FOR A BUNCH OF FOLKS who have just had their medical benefits axed by the Walt Disney Company, the picketers outside ABC's Upper West Side studios don't seem too heartbroken. The scent of hot chocolate is everywhere, and a passing pizza-delivery guy almost gets roped into handing over his pies to the strikers. One techie even idly swings around an open canister of gasoline for the generator that inflates the group's enormous "Mickey Rat" prop. "This is our company's last shot at us," crows Paul Vasquez, a WABC videotape operator turned strike-crew chief who volunteered to picket on Thanksgiving. "Nothing they do seems to be working."

Within a few minutes, though, the line's ranks thin from two dozen to a paltry six. Much of the crowd, it turns out, was made up of a City College class studying a dying breed: members of the country's labor movement. "We discussed the differences between strikes and lockouts," says instructor Bill Henning. "As one of the picketers said, 'Welcome to the lab.' "

Since the November 3 lockout, strikers have enjoyed a big boost from their brethren at WNBC and WCBS, who've been trying to get replacement workers booted from press conferences. The likes of Tony Bennett, Adam Sandler, Whoopi Goldberg, and Al Gore have done their part by refusing to cross the lines. But the coalition-building hasn't translated into success at the negotiating table, and now the dispute is stretching on far longer than anyone planned. The Columbus Avenue picket line looks more and more like a slice of history—a marching, shouting object lesson on Disney's invulnerability to public embarrassment.

Of course, the lockout continues to cause some hardships for the company. Replacement workers, after all, don't come cheap: Per diems are rumored to run higher than the norm, and one local news correspondent observes that WABC always sends out two-man crews, sometimes with a security guard to maintain a visible presence amid picketers who trail them around town. And a few early on-screen stunts by picketers did move local-news affiliate WABC to curtail its use of live remote broadcasts.

(continued on page 16)

SUBPLOT

Ticketmasters of the Universe

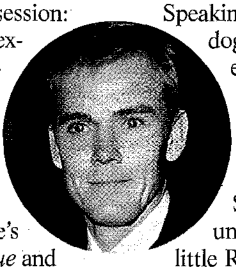
WHICH SCORES HIGHER with Knicks fans: watching their team hobble through another season, or securing a sweet investment return? Last week, Woody Allen, Spike Lee, and the Knicks' 5,500 other season-ticket-holders were refunded the cost of the unplayed October and November home games—plus a separate check for interest on their payments, calculated at a generous 6 percent annual rate.

● The rate is an NBA-wide policy, meant to temper the rage of subscribers. "Our entire season-subscription staff has been working hard over the course of the last month," says Chris Weiller of the Knicks.

● The quality of the issue is debatable, but with interest rates nosediving, you can't beat the return. "You might have an open market on those things," speculates money manager Robert Stovall of Stovall/Twenty-First Advisers. "For people who go to the games and bet on the spreads, I bet 6 percent is better than what they'd do during the regular season." Would Stovall take a shot at this market? "I never wager off the job," he says. R. K.

CAMEO

Hey Rick, You're So Fine, You Blow My Mind, Hey Rick



IT'S SOME OF THE BEST PLASTIC SURGERY THIS century. That or demonic possession: Surely age alone is insufficient to explain Rick(y) Schroder's transformation from hypersaccharine sitcom munchkin to tough-talking adult of no more than average munchkinliness. With his dreadful eighties spoiled-child incarnation still narcotizing third-world TV markets, he's stepped onto the streets of *NYPD Blue* and into the big, sexy shoes of Jimmy Smits. (Well, not sexy shoes per se, but you get the point.) Speaking as though raised by a pack of stray dogs in East New York, he now converses with Dennis Franz in a hard-bitten patter so complexly mannered it's practically Elizabethan. At the end of the next millennium, when all urban populations speak like Martha Stewart, some grad student's going to uncover the lost videocassettes. And little Rick(y) Schroder will be enshrined as the poet laureate of New Yorkese.

Photographs: top, Lynsey Addario/AP/Wide World Photos; bottom, Steve Granitz/Retna.

Lockout *continued from page 15*

The difference, however, is barely noticeable. "I look at the ratings on a daily basis, and I don't see it hurting them," says Clayton Sizemore, field-operations manager for WNBC. And while November broadcasts had several replacement-worker snafus, the temps are getting more comfortable every day. "It looks like some of the per diems are starting to get the hang of it," notes Don Collins, a former WCBS technician who now works for Direct Broadcast Services, a nonunion subcontractor.

Meanwhile, union mobilization director Jim Joyce and other organizers are rushing to prove rumors of ABC treachery. On the line, there are whispers that the network masquerades as ESPN when hiring replacements and pressures other stations not to hire locked-out workers. There are also whispers, although Joyce denies them, of simmering discontent with union leadership. "The guys I talk to on the line say the union's led them down this line and there's very little they can do," says WCBS technician Steven Bikofsky.

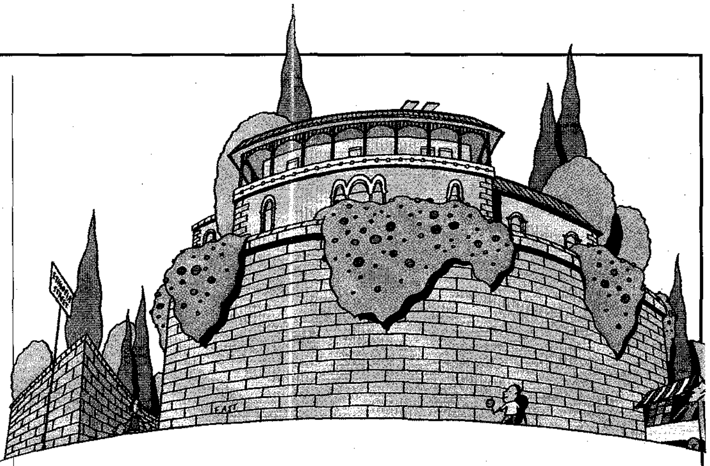
Any grumbling would come as good news to management, which is eager to spin the lockout as a morality tale about reckless labor chiefs. "ABC has a contract that is more expensive and more restrictive than that of any other broadcaster in the country," argues ABC spokeswoman Julie Hoover. She insists that ABC does not want to bust its union shop—but she's also quick to mention all the nonunion technicians who would love to work there.

Are the locked-out workers the victims of crafty management or the short attention span of union sympathizers? As the lockout story loses freshness, the one stunt the union really needs to pull off—taking its cause to the airwaves—seems less and less workable. Last Monday, workers came out to jeer Disney chief Michael Eisner at the entrance of the AMFAR benefit. Maybe they should have brought along Mickey Rat: Even replacement workers knew that the money shot was on Tom Hanks. ROBERT KOLKER

REAL ESTATE

Rennert Redux

The mansion-building scourge of L.I. strikes again in Jerusalem.



BUILDING A 100,000-square-foot beachside compound is hard enough even without the entire Hamptons arriviste community fighting you tooth and nail. But imagine constructing two vacation compounds at once, half a world apart.

Welcome to the life of Ira Rennert, the reclusive millionaire who radicalized sleepy Sagaponack with plans for an audacious complex. As tempers flare over that project, he's acquired—and is busy remodeling—one of the most expensive private homes in Jerusalem, on a crooked lane known as Ethiopia Street.

The new Rennert property is a short walk from the Old City in an area of notable nineteenth-century homes, where bougainvillaea cascades over stone walls. The street, named for its circular Ethiopian Church, is something of a Zionist landmark; near the end is a hidden house that served as a secret headquarters of the Hagannah, Israel's pre-state army.

The Rennert compound, at No. 3, was built in the late nineteenth century as rental properties by the Nashashibi family, a prominent Arab clan. Rennert bought the property in 1996 for a rumored 12 million shekels (then valued at $4 million), outbidding a famous Israeli pianist who is said to have offered "$2 million plus a Renoir and a Cezanne." Realtors say it was the highest price paid that year for a Jerusalem home.

Rennert quickly began transforming the property, hiring the noted Israeli architect Daniel Lansky. Lansky's first move was to scrap a modern-looking penthouse that a previous occupant had built. The architect replaced it with a rooftop iron-latticed veranda that gives the house, he says, "a light hat."

The construction is continuing, and on a recent sunny day, Lansky was eating lunch at an outdoor table with his workers. At first, he seemed eager to discuss his work. "The bottom is good Jerusalem stone," said Lansky, "but the top is rubbish that absorbed water. I've sealed it to last for 300 years." The house, boasted Lansky, will have the most advanced electrical, climate-control, and water-filtration systems in Israel. "Hiding all these systems within the walls is my greatest triumph," he added. Asked for a tour of the house, Lansky suddenly stiffened and ended the interview.

The secretive Rennert would no doubt have frowned on his architect's showing off the new quarters, but he hardly has the kind of worries in Jerusalem that he does in Sagaponack. In fact, around the neighborhood, no one even seems to know anything about the new mogul on the block. "He must be a very rich man," said a man selling newspapers nearby. "When I am also very rich, then I will know him." PETER HELLMAN

WILDLIFE

Holden Caulfield Would Sure Love Global Warming

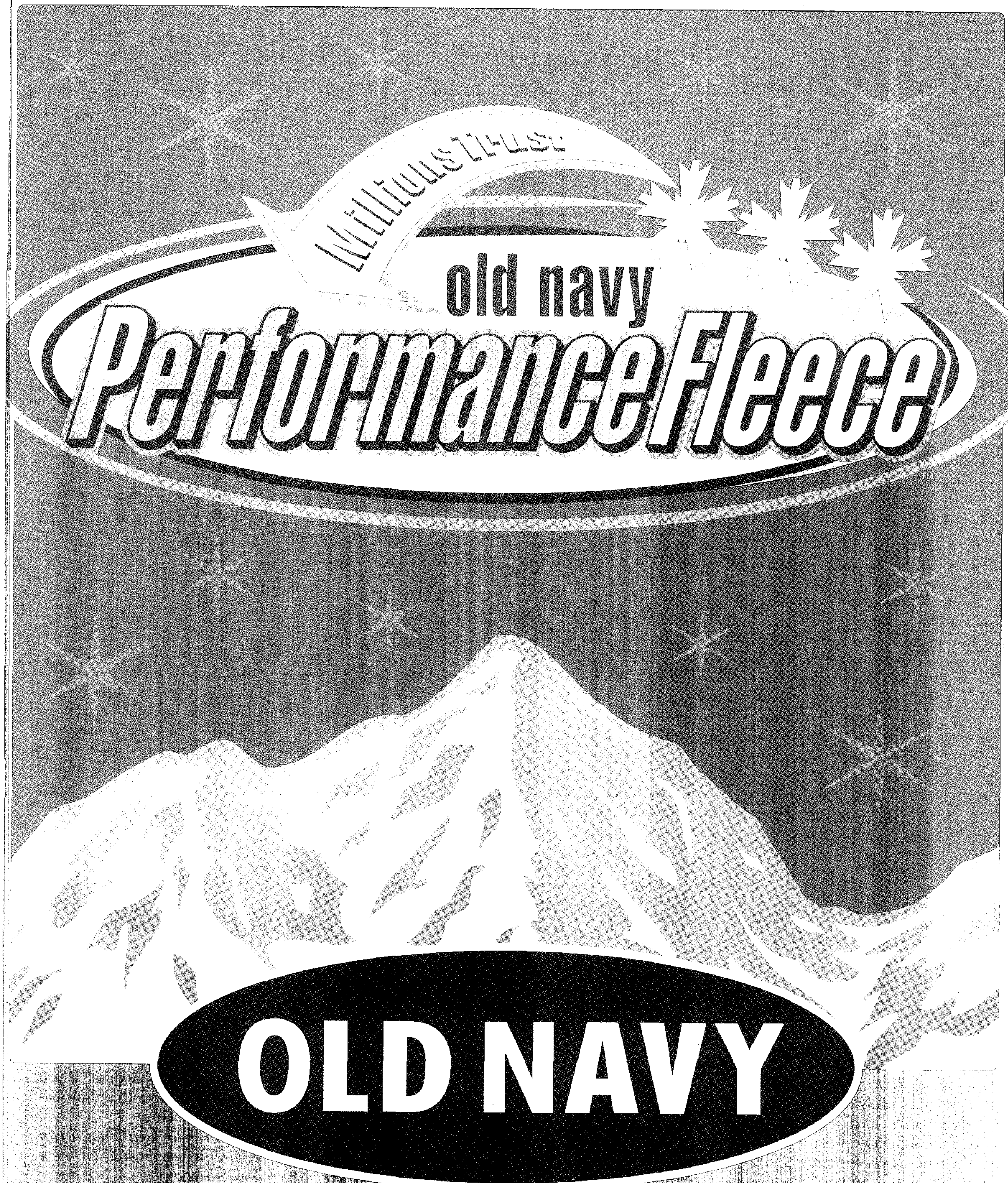
NEW YORKERS WHO FRET OVER THE FATE OF the Central Park ducks in the winter, as Holden Caulfield did, may have to find something else to worry about this year. Thanks to milder winters, the ducks that populate the park should have no problem staying put. "New York winters are not what they were," explains Parks Commissioner Henry Stern. "The pond doesn't freeze anymore."

It's not just pleasant temperatures that keep the mallards and black ducks in the city; microscopic plant life thrives in warmer weather, as do tourists, and together they supply the waterfowl with a steady diet. "If there were no human beings in Manhattan," says Mary Anne McNulty, deputy director of the Urban Park Rangers, "they would probably all leave by the end of November like normal ducks."

As temperatures drop, the ducks will seek out the larger bodies of water in the park. And if they do have to head south, the ducks can fly as high as 20,000 feet, reaching speeds of up to 60 miles per hour. A few unfortunate ones, though, get left behind. Those fluffy white ducks that people buy as cuddly pets for Easter, and then often abandon in the park when they get too big, are doomed if it gets too cold. "They don't migrate," explains McNulty. "They're lucky if they can swim." SARAH BERNARD

Ducks wintering in Central Park's pond.

Illustration by Ingo Fast
Photograph by Sandra Baker/Gamma Liaison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SPORTS

The Great Albanian Hope

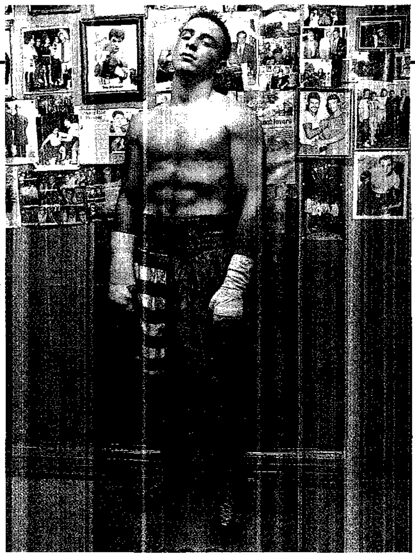
When the kid from Kosovo steps into the ring, he fights for more than money and fame.

Two hours before his pro debut in Atlantic City, prizefighter Elvir Muriqi seems remarkably composed and focused—until he notices the back of his new red satin robe. Decorated with a two-headed eagle, it is supposed to resemble the Albanian flag. But Muriqi spots a serious discrepancy—a star on top, signifying Serbian rule—and flies into a rage, spewing forth a stream of invective in his native Albanian and demanding a red marker to conceal the mistake. It may seem like a minor detail, but to the young boxer and his family—not to mention his legion of supporters back in Kosovo—the symbol is more important than the fight itself.

Muriqi has been in the United States since only 1996. He had won Kosovo's amateur kickboxing title at 15 and was about to start training for the Olympic trials when his father moved the entire family to the Bronx. Muriqi started boxing in local amateur bouts as a light heavyweight and even won a decision against a heavyweight. But it was not until the 1998 Golden Gloves at Madison Square Garden that people began to talk. He swept through his preliminary fights and, in the final, put on such a dominating performance that renowned commentator Gil Clancy called him "the best prospect I've seen in years." Tony Danza, Gerry Cooney, and Magic Johnson each called to inquire about backing him. The young Albanian signed with Frank LoCascio, a local manager, to be close to home. "I live with my family," Muriqi says. "I feel safe there."

His family, however, would not stay together for long. In January of this year, his father, Rumz Muriqi, returned to Serbia to join the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA). Today he lives in a mountain town, supplying food and clothing to some of the province's nearly 180,000 homeless. "He went back to Kosovo because he had to," says Elvir. "He wants to die over there. I feel good that he's there. If I wasn't boxing, I'd be there."

But for the time being, he is boxing, and he approaches his sport with the same intensity he feels for his country. "The mission he's on is 75 percent mental," says his trainer, the legendary Teddy Atlas. "You have to focus all the time," Muriqi explains.



Elvir Muriqi, a boxer and Kosovo separatist.

Outside the ring, though, it's another story. A Muslim (like a majority of Kosovo's population), he does not drink alcohol or take drugs, but he freely avails himself of the other pleasures of rising stardom. "I like to dress nice," he confesses. "And I'll go to clubs, the movies, or go eat." Women? He giggles, then starts laughing uncontrollably. "I go out with lots of girls. I don't want just one."

Atlas, who's trained such champions as Michael Moorer and Mike Tyson, was initially struck by the confidence and skill—not to mention the concentration—that already gives Muriqi the aura of a champion. His opponents have not failed to notice those qualities, either. "The average guy don't want to fight," says former contender Tyrone "the Harlem Butcher" Jackson. "They're looking for any excuse not to fight, because they're scared. This kid wants to fight. That's the difference."

Back at Trump Marina, the Rocky theme is blaring from the loudspeaker. Flanked by a dozen compatriots in red KLA T-shirts, the Kosovo Kid enters the ring for his first bout. His opponent stands nervously in a corner, looking like he showed up at the wrong party. One minute and 23 seconds later, the Kid's left hook ends the fight.

It's a big win, but Atlas tries to keep him grounded. "He hasn't proven anything yet," he warns. And his effort to prove himself recently hit a snag: Following his second pro fight (a win), he tore a finger ligament, and he's just now getting back into the ring. "Don't worry. I'm still young," he insists. "Teddy says it's all part of being a champion." For the Kosovo Kid, the battle's just begun.

Tim Struby

TRAFFIC

Hello, Operator? Why Are There So Many Jerks in New York?

Mayor Giuliani recently launched the Gridlock Hotline (877-GRIDLOC) for responsible drivers who wish to tattle on their double-parking, box-blocking peers. Turning in scofflaws is always fun, but is gridlock really a behavioral problem? Can a snitch line do anything about the city's real traffic nightmares? We put in a call:

NYPD Gridlock Hotline operator 11, may I help you?

Hi. I'm calling because of the Holland Tunnel.

Yes, sir?

It's just really crowded. People have been cutting in line. And then other people feel stepped on and they start honking and then sometimes there's—there's this smell. It builds up.

Right. Right. Is there a specific complaint you'd like to make?

Well, I just think we should do something about the jerks. I feel like all the jerks gather in the city. You go out to the suburbs and everybody's nice.

Oh, yeah, yeah. That's the way it is, I suppose. I know there's traffic gauges around the Holland Tunnel to try to alleviate the condition.

But there's gotta be some way to tell people how to do it right.

I will make a notation of the time and, uh, Holland Tunnel and all that. Are you—you are—speaking specifically about—?

Going down Varick, there was this guy yesterday just yelling out his window and honking. People don't know how to drive. If you could just nail the people who are screwing around, it'd probably make the whole thing 15 to 20 percent better.

Right. Right. Some people don't stay in their right lanes. I can call up the people who assign the traffic gauges and let them know. Perhaps that might help. I will do that.

Do they have some kind of ticket they can give to people just for being a jerk?

[Laughs] I'd like to see it myself. Maybe the City Council could pass something. Jerk is a relative term, of course.

Well, Rudy's the guy to go after 'em.

That's why we're here exactly. I will pass on your comments.

John Bowe

Photograph by David Barry.

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SOCIETY

Operation Deb

Cadets get drafted at the Bachelors' Brunch.

A deb chats up cadets from Norwich University at Au Bar.

THE REST OF NEW YORK IS still groggy from holiday excess, but on the Saturday morning after Thanksgiving, Au Bar is already bustling. In place of the cigar-toting dandies who usually fill the bordello-like venue, troupes of Hermès-clad socialites have gathered for the Bachelors' Brunch, a pregame mixer for the International Debutante Ball. Those who attend the ball, which benefits the Soldiers', Sailors', Marines' and Airmen's Club, must bring two escorts, one military and one civilian; the brunch, now in its forty-fifth year, allows debs to chat up cadets from military schools and sign one up for the evening's service.

"I wouldn't miss this for anything," sighs Sarah Stroh, a "post-deb" who has returned to help the next generation. "This year I'll be wearing a pink-and-gold embroidered dress, like a fairy princess."

It may seem to outsiders like an archaic ritual, but to the 50 girls from as far as Connecticut, Texas, even Scotland, who'll be at the Waldorf-Astoria on December 29, the ceremony is still very real. "My mother did this ball, and she said it was the most fun," explains Ashley Smith, a freshman at Ole Miss. "And I said, 'Granddaddy, I've always wanted to do this!' "

Some of the girls are more self-conscious. Elizabeth Harsch, 19, took a class in college in which a video about debutantes was used to illustrate conformity. "Everyone was laughing," she says, "and I'm shrinking in my chair."

After an hour of awkward mingling, the young men are instructed to form a receiving line across the dance floor. The debs then make their way down the gauntlet (some in pairs, some trailed by their mothers) and size up the contenders.

At six feet three, Jennifer Levin is towering over a boy from Rhode Island, but they see eye-to-eye on one thing: "Yeah, *South Park* rocks," she says sheepishly.

Not the stuff of romance novels, maybe, but partnering for the ball tends to be more a matter of convenience than one of connection. "For us, it's pretty much a job," says Justin Dupuis, a senior at Norwich University military academy. Three cadets from Annapolis, however, marvel at their good fortune. "We get to hang out with the upper echelon of New York society, and there's a lot of beautiful women," says Tim O'Connor, 21. As if on cue, a blonde from Texas interrupts to offer him her calling card.

But some participants won't make it to the big day. As a group of wallflowers work the open bar, Laurance Guido, 22, explains he's been to three brunches, but never to the actual ball. "But I'm always away," he insists, sipping a martini.

Ms. Levin, however, can hardly wait. "Last time, when I did my curtsy, there was a hushed silence," she explains. "You get to feel important, and I want to feel that way again. Plus," she says, "Neil from West Point said he found me someone six foot seven."

Sarah Bernard

THE SCENE

Mondo Condo

Photographs by Patrick McMullan

Robert Kennedy Jr. and Chris Cuomo celebrating the Creative Coalition's Spotlight Awards at the Pierre Hotel.

Ian and Rita Schrager with Starwood Hotels chairman and CEO Barry Sternlicht at the opening of Starwood's W New York hotel.

Arista Records' Clive Davis and Whitney Houston at the World Financial Center for an AMFAR benefit, at which Davis received the Award of Courage.

Anna Condo and Paige Powell at Joe's Pub celebrating the publication of Marco Brambilla's new book of photography, *Transit*.

Architect Rem Koolhaas and Frances Reynolds Marinho at the Lehmann Maupin gallery for a dinner following Sotheby's auction of Latin American art.

Lisa B. and Lawrence Bender at the Carlyle, celebrating the publication of *AH Allen*, Anna Condo's book about the life and poetry of Allen Ginsberg.

Photograph by Mark Peterson/Saba.

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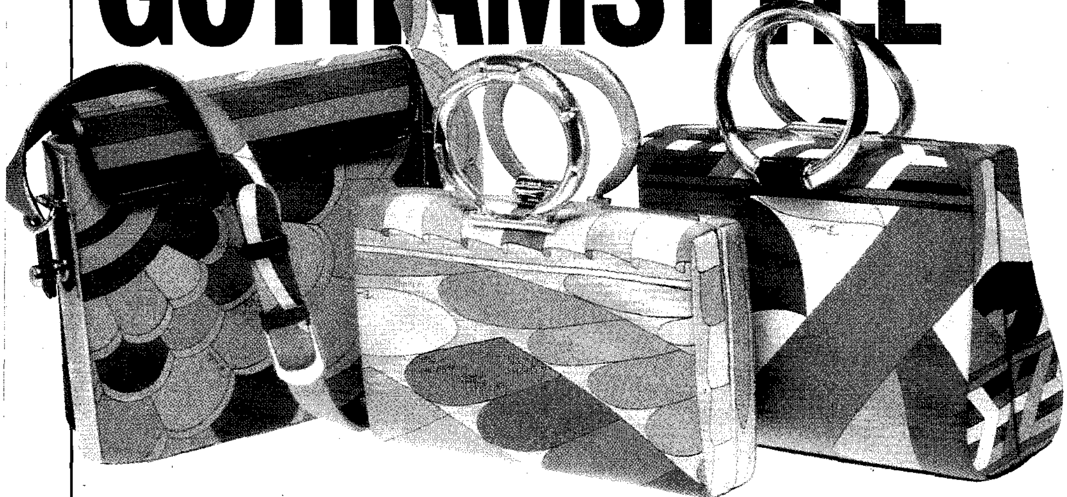


Attention All Bag Hags

Sotheby's December 9 handbag sale (benefiting AIDS and breast-cancer charities) is a chic way for celebrities to clear their closets and do some high-level fashion recycling. Madonna's auctioning a Versace; Nancy Reagan's pitching in her Judith Lieber; Anna Wintour is unloading some Prada, some Fendi, and some Dolce & Gabbana. As for the Miller sisters, it's Hermès, Chanel, and Cartier as far as the eye can see. In addition, there will be budget Minaudières and vintage finds like Pucci silk bags (pictured); estimated prices range from $200 to $20,000. "Sure, there'll be interest in a Vuitton trunk just because it was owned by Diana Vreeland," says Sotheby's fashion director Tiffany Dubin. "But it's still a great suitcase." **SHYAMA PATEL**

U, Nu?

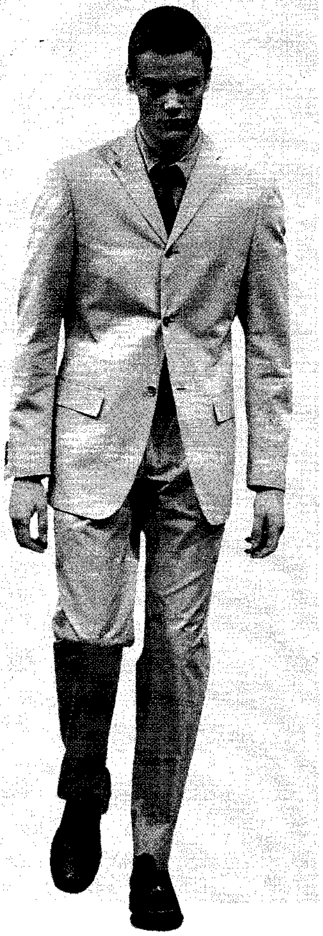
The bustling babushkas and crowded street vendors along Brooklyn's Avenue U have a new neighbor: Peak, a two-floor boutique that, most improbably, features hard-to-find couture from Japan, Belgium, and France. "Flash and color is what Russian women have always wanted. They love Sonia Rykiel velour suits, Cartier sunglasses, anything with a label," says proprietor Arthur Rosenberg, a 24-year-old Odessa expat. "My hope is that I've opened their eyes to something different." Indeed, the store is full of such experimental labels as Dries Van Noten, Dirk Bikkemberg, and Yohji Yamamoto, and it's one of the only stores in New York to carry Claude Montana and JC de Castelbajac—with nary a gold epaulet or feather boa in sight. MAURA EGAN

Bye-Bye Bikini Blues

Crowded and harshly lit fitting rooms make bathing-suit shopping torture; it's no wonder that many people take refuge in a J. Crew catalogue. But at last, Malia Mills—the designer of some of the world's best-fitting bikinis—has come up with a solution. She's turned the back third of her new boutique at 199 Mulberry Street into a golden-walled, purple-carpeted lounge where shoppers can hang out while modeling her lingerie-inspired mix-and-match swimwear sets ($120–$200) for friends. "We recognize what an emotional purchase swimwear is," says Mills, "but if we can just get our hands on these girls, we can really make a difference." **ARIEL LEVY**

Pants, Perfected

Despite occasional extravagances like fur-collared tuxedos or wide-cropped sweat-trousers, men's fashion over the past few seasons has placed an emphasis on the traditional English silhouette: three-button jacket with a plain or single-pleat pant. But designers' interpretations of these classics tend to be styled for models' bodies. "Helmut Lang trousers? Forget it. Prada is hard enough for middle-aged men, even if you work out five times a week," says Bill Frappier, the creative director of Goldsmith Mannequins. This week only, Barneys is providing Savile Row and Italian tailors for customers of every dimension who wish to wear the latest looks—made-to-measure by the men who originated them (prices around $900). Frappier chose charcoal-gray covert-wool trousers: "I made the leg just a little bit fuller."



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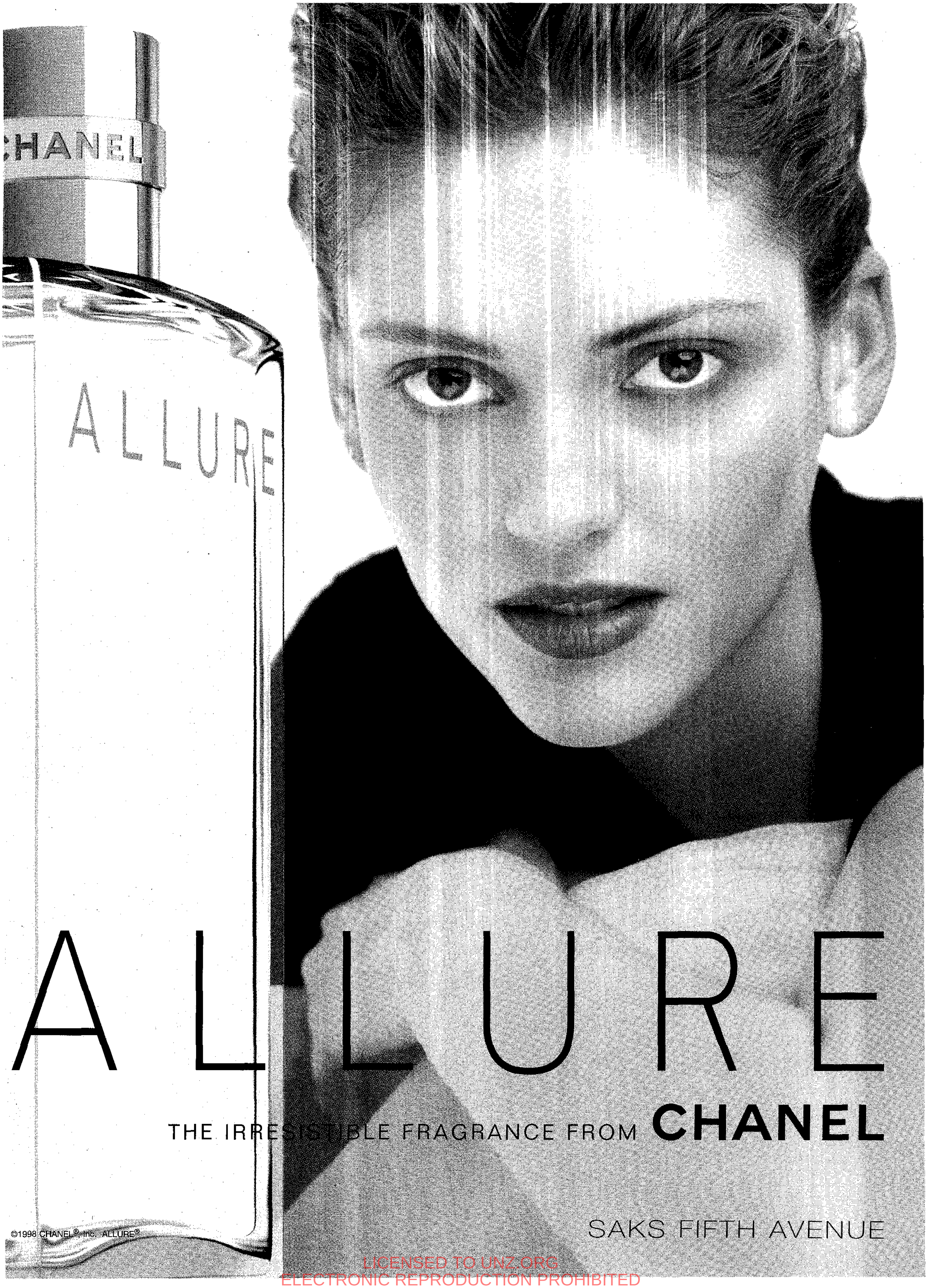
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THE CULTURE BUSINESS PAUL ALEXANDER

Warhol and Peace

After a long, byzantine wrangle—and as Dennis Vacco plays his election endgame—the attorney general's office has finally come to terms with the Warhol Foundation.

FRESH FROM HIS TRIUMPH OVER PEter Diamondopoulos of Adelphi last year, Dennis Vacco set out to rein in the Andy Warhol Foundation. "We need to protect not only the charitable dollars but also the national treasure of Andy Warhol's artistic legacy," he told this magazine.

In all likelihood, reining in the Warhol Foundation may be just about the last thing he does as the state's attorney general. (Unless a state-court judge rules in Vacco's favor this week, he will have lost his election.)

The foundation has long been accused of mismanaging the paintings and other assets left to it in Warhol's will. At the center of the conflict has been Archibald Gillies, the foundation's president, a tall, balding, preppy man whose résumé includes stints working for Jock Whitney and Nelson Rockefeller but virtually no art-related experience (his previous job was as head of the World Policy Institute, a left-leaning think tank).

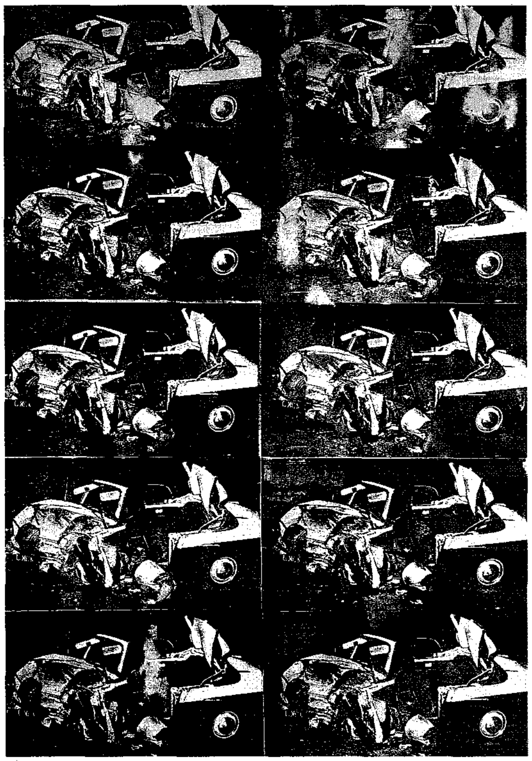
After an eight-month struggle of near-byzantine complexity, Vacco's office reached an agreement that leaves Gillies in his job but puts the foundation under the oversight of a new audit committee that will report quarterly to the attorney general's office. And suddenly everyone is making nice. "The audit committee is an idea borrowed from the for-profit world, where audit committees are fairly common," says Matt Sansverie, head of the attorney general's charities bureau. "It's a gesture of good faith."

"It's a fair and proper agreement," says Gillies. "It will include some improvements with the way we present our financial information to ourselves and to the outside world."

More openness is certainly needed. Whether openness itself is enough remains to be seen.

VACCO'S INVESTIGATION BEGAN TO HEAT UP one afternoon in May when James McCauley, a man who for several years had been the controller for the Warhol Foundation, showed up to do something he really didn't want to do: inform against his former boss, Gillies.

McCauley, however, had no choice. By reputation an honest and hardworking employee, he was nevertheless in the crosshairs of the investigation. He'd resigned weeks before because he felt that his use of a company credit card for personal expenses (later reimbursed) might be a source of legal trouble. Worse, as controller, he was one of the foundation officials who had signed off on documents such as financial statements, state tax forms, federal tax forms, and so on. This meant he could be held accountable for wrongdoing at the foundation whether or not he had been involved in creating it.


Andy Warhol's 1963 silk screen *Car Crash*.

On this day in May, in the attorney general's Manhattan office, McCauley was talking to Sansverie, confirming rumors and reported speculation that had been circulating about Gillies and the foundation for years. Yes, McCauley said, the foundation routinely underappraised its assets of Warhol art—by hundreds of millions of dollars—so foundation officials could get by with giving away less money. Yes, members of the foundation's board of directors engaged in unusual behavior, such as in 1993 when Agnes Gund (now president of the Museum of Modern Art), who then sat on the Warhol board, bought something called "The Lips Book," a book full of original Warhol drawings of lips, from the foundation's stock for $55,000, although the book was worth vastly more than that. Yes, Gillies, who as president receives a salary of $250,000 annually, plus a generous retirement package, took sixteen weeks of paid vacation last year and regularly disappeared for four-hour lunches.

McCauley's recollections only amplified what many in the art world had been saying for years: Gillies and many of his colleagues at the foundation were more interested in the perquisites of their jobs than in furthering the vision Warhol had charged them with. "There's nothing about the foundation Andy would have been pleased with," says Paige Powell, a close friend of Warhol's. Brigid Berlin, another friend, agrees, adding, "All they're doing at the foundation is spending Andy's money."

One previous attorney general, Oliver Koppell, launched an investigation that fizzled. "They found nothing wrong," says Gillies. And in the mid-nineties, the foundation was embroiled in a much-publicized legal feud with its former lawyer, Edward Hayes, that played itself out in Surrogate's Court before Judge Eve Preminger.

At issue in the Hayes case was the value of the foundation's enormous cache of Warhol art. Federal law mandates that nonprofit foundations give away 5 percent of their assets. In 1994, Judge

Photograph from the Andy Warhol Foundation, Inc./Art Resource, NY

Preminger valued the collection at around $400 million, more than triple the figure the foundation was using. But most years, the foundation has valued the collection at much less than many art-world observers believe it to be worth; last year, the figure it used was $81 million. And in most years, it didn't even give away 5 percent of its own, low valuation. In 1997, for instance, it donated a total of $1.2 million, against overhead costs of $4.3 million.

WHAT CAUGHT THE ATTENTION OF THE ATTORNEY general's office was the foundation's "unusually high expenses," Sansverie says. Sometime in the spring, the attorney general's office contacted McCauley. He resigned from the foundation shortly afterward and decided to cooperate with the attorney general. In the end, to avoid a potentially long and costly legal dispute, the attorney general—and, for that matter, the foundation—willingly entered into an agreement.

Under the terms of that agreement, the foundation will appoint a new chief financial officer, who will have a more central role within the foundation than the controller did. "In the future," Sansverie says, "some of the day-to-day financial decisions being made by Mr. Gillies will be shifted to the chief financial officer."

As for why Gillies, the object of much criticism in the past, still has his job, Sansverie will say only this: "If Gillies isn't doing his job, then the directors will have to get together and fire him."

Up to now, the board has supported Gillies in his various tribulations; he's been instrumental in bringing in many of its members. Now, however, there will be at least two new independent members, drawn from the audit committee. "The committee will have three members," Sansverie says, "none of whom is an officer of the foundation. Two of the three members will be on the board of directors. The attorney general will have some informal input about who will be the type of person to sit on this committee, which will perform an ongoing watchdog role on the expenses and expenditures of the foundation. The new CFO will report both to the president of the foundation and to the audit committee."

The new agreement may curtail some of the foundation's chronic overspending—each year, officials there routinely spend more than three dollars to give away one, the reverse of what a not-for-profit's spending-giving ratio should be—but one important issue isn't mentioned in the agreement: the foundation's undervaluation of its art assets. "That's an IRS issue, not a state-law issue," Sansverie says. "There is no specific state statute that says a certain amount has to be given away each year."

And what if the IRS, which is said to have looked at the foundation's books only to have done nothing, decides not to step in? "I'm not saying if nothing were done we wouldn't have anything to do about it," says Sansverie. "But it would be in the most general sense. The state attorney general's office isn't in the business of enforcing a federal law."

"We've been vindicated in this process," says Gillies, "although we've never done anything but report these matters in the correct way."

But in a war that's lasted most of the nineties, one wonders if this is peace, or just a temporary truce. ■

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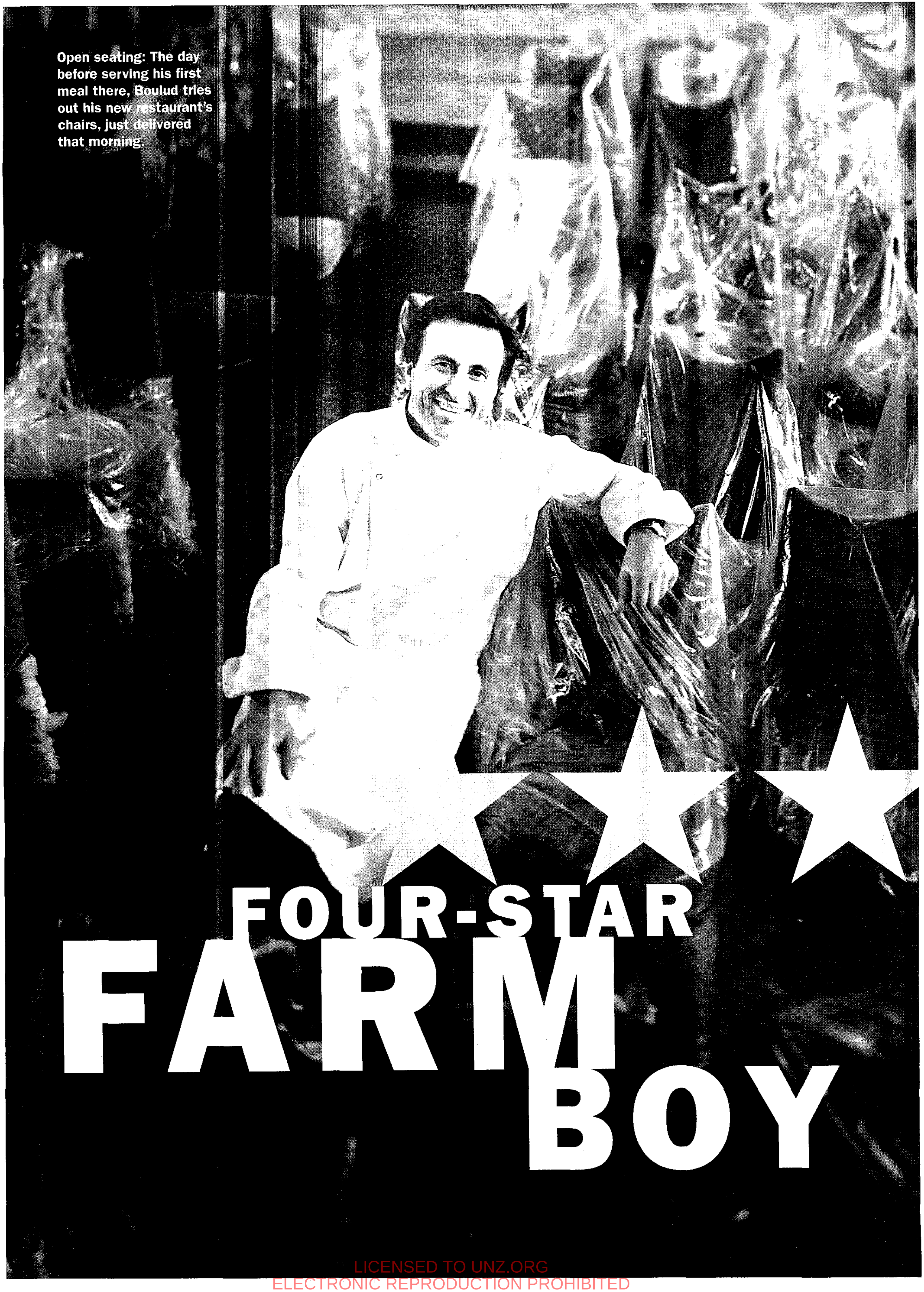


Open seating: The day before serving his first meal there, Boulud tries out his new restaurant's chairs, just delivered that morning.

FOUR-STAR FARM BOY

He's already the most decorated chef in town, but Daniel Boulud is upping the ante with his lavish new restaurant—the ultimate homage to the simple tastes of his French country childhood. By Peter Kaminsky

Before every meal served by Daniel Boulud, New York's longest-reigning four-star chef holds a staff meeting with his entire crew. This one is taking place in the garage of investment banker Bruce Wasserstein's East Hampton estate one hour before 60 guests arrive for a $25,000-a-plate Democratic Party fund-raiser. Since the guest of honor is President Clinton, the grounds are crawling with Secret Service agents in full monty: earpieces, buzz cuts, and high-powered rifles. Every pot and pan brought in by Boulud, every truffle, medallion of tuna, and bottle of Mondavi Special Reserve 1982, has already been searched and hand-patted by the presidential security detail. Even the cold cuts

Photographed by Mark Seelen

used in the sandwiches that Boulud and his team are wolfing down before the guests arrive have gotten the once-over from an eager German shepherd, the republic's last line of defense against a terrorist mortadella attack.

The pressure is on, yet Boulud is the picture of Gallic cool, impassively chewing on his sandwich and listening as his catering director runs down a service checklist that is as complex as an NFL pass defense. Two squadrons of six waiters, each waiter carrying two plates, will simultaneously be dispatched to the dining room. The meal must move along at the accelerated pace known as "presidential service"—i.e., as soon as any one diner at a table completes a course, the waiters are to take that as a signal to remove *every* diner's plate. That way, the president is assured that the dinner won't drag on forever. The corollary is, of course, don't linger over the lobster.

Boulud swallows a last, huge bite, looks around the garage, and cracks a tight-lipped let-me-at-'em grin. He ends the meeting with a huddle-breaking "Let's kick ass!"

That's exactly what they do.

The menu is classic Boulud, simple, powerful flavors in a well-orchestrated progression: Long Island lobster, seared tuna wrapped in pancetta, a medley of lamb accompanied by a zucchini flower filled with eggplant confit. There are no leftovers—a group of Secret Service agents and White House staff loitering near the kitchen see to that—and in the end, the weary president and First Lady stop by the kitchen for a chat with Boulud. Hillary makes small talk about his cookbook, while the president, a notorious chocoholic, lavishes praise on the chocolate cake served for dessert. Clinton laughs when someone on the kitchen crew lets slip a sotto voce "Hail to the chef."

"On 76th Street, the box was just too small. Daniel's ambition was not satisfied simply having a society place."

DANIEL BOULUD, 43, IS NO STRANGER to feeding presidents and kings, not to mention show-business royalty and titans of high finance. For years, they've been crowding into Restaurant Daniel, his small but high-powered establishment on East 76th Street. Basically, since the doors first opened in 1992, it's been reservation "by recommendation" only. Charlie Palmer, chef-owner of Aureole, sums up what almost every chef I spoke to thinks about Boulud: "'If I could eat only one meal, I would probably go to Daniel. He is about powerhouse taste, maximum flavor."

Now Boulud has re-created his jewel of a restaurant (which was closed in August) on a much grander scale eleven blocks south, in the lavishly restored former Mayfair Hotel at 610 Park Avenue. The Mayfair has been converted to luxury condos—Nautica's David Chu reportedly just paid between $10 million and $12 million for two adjoining apartments, and Wayne Gretzky and Naomi Campbell are said to be about to close on their own new spaces—and it happens to be the former site of one of Boulud's great triumphs: as chef at Le Cirque.

The price tag on the new restaurant, more than $10 million, is the highest amount ever spent on a single dining space in the city. And the fact that the new Restaurant Daniel is three times the size of the old Le Cirque, where Boulud labored for restaurateur-impresario Sirio Maccioni, and cost twice as much as the *new* Le Cirque, only serves to heat up the already simmering Oedipal tension between Boulud and his former mentor.

"On 76th Street, the box was just too small," observes Boulud's bracingly direct business adviser Lili Lynton. "Daniel's ambition was not satisfied simply having a society place."

Boulud's high-stakes gamble is even more singular in this era of upscale food entrepreneurs—men like Drew Nieporent, Danny Meyer, Ken Aretsky, and, of course, Maccioni, who are skilled at working the dining room while leaving the cooking to others. Daniel is a restaurant that has been built from the chef, and the kitchen, out.

ALTHOUGH BOULUD IS A FRENCH CHEF, schooled in a trio of Michelin three-star restaurants, the new Daniel is definitely not a "French restaurant" with spindly Louis Quinze chairs and poofy Second Empire tchotchkes. It is a lush, ornate, Venetian-Byzantine-Deco fantasy. In the words of the designer, Patrick Naggar, who has an intriguing Sephardic, French, and Egyptian heritage, it is "a deconstructed Renaissance painting": the gold of Giotto in a Deco cocktail bar, the checkerboard pattern on all the rugs reminiscent of Piero della Francesca, velvet and damask wall hangings that suggest the garments in a settecento painting. "What I have asked myself in building this room," explains Naggar, "is, can you combine history and modern comment in a great restaurant? I think you can."

In creating a palimpsest of centuries of culture, Naggar is attempting to do for the new restaurant's décor what Boulud does with his reinvented pot-au-feu. The foundation of his cooking has always been ancient French farmhouse recipes that he passes through the refiner's fire of high culinary technique.

"He makes gutsy food, but he does it with such finesse," says former *Times* restaurant critic Bryan Miller, who gave Boulud his first four-star review back when the 31-year-old Frenchman was the chef at Le Cirque. "I thought it was great that he would put pigs' feet on the menu—a real peasant dish, but the best pigs' feet you will ever have."

At heart, Daniel Boulud remains a country boy.

THE BOULUD FARM, A FAMILY ENTERprise, lies in a green valley near the sleepy agricultural community of St. Pierre de Chandieu, about twenty miles outside Lyons. Daniel Boulud returns there for a holiday every summer with his wife, Micky, a former family therapist, and their 9-year-old daughter, Alix. Along the way, of course, he likes to visit old dining haunts and is constantly trying out new ones. "He thinks about food deeply and all the time," says his wife. "He likes golf and tries to play it on Sundays, but truthfully he'd rather check out a new restaurant."

On one recent trip to France, I join him and his sommelier, Jean-Luc Le Dû, on a drive from Paris, down through the heart of the Côte d'Or, and on to the Boulud farm. Boulud drives very fast, listens to very loud Howlin' Wolf tapes, and routinely polishes off such quantities of food that his trim figure can only be explained by a metabolism that would exhaust a hummingbird. In five days, we eat at four Michelin three-star restaurants and taste-test hundreds of Burgundies.

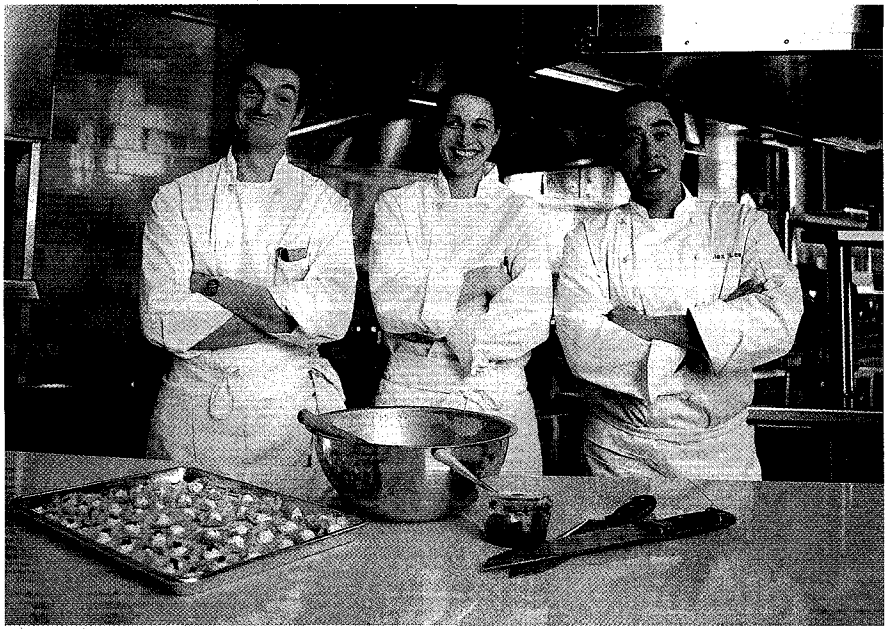
We arrive at the Boulud farm on a warm and sunny Saturday afternoon. The farmhouse is a generic gray stone-and-stucco structure dating from the mid–nineteenth century, but there are three things in the backyard that demonstrate clearly how far Boulud has come. To the left, a modern swimming pool and tennis court occupy the place where the family's chicken coop used to be. But right in the middle of the backyard there's a very large and unattractive electrical pylon. It was erected in the sixties, when the family farm was still a shoestring operation, and a local nobleman offered area farmers

several hundred dollars apiece if they would allow the electric wires and towers that brought power to the valley to pass through their land rather than impinge on his view from the château.

The Boulud accepted the offer. "Hey, man," Daniel explains, looking up at the ugly tower, "that was a lot of money for a small farmer, and we were *small.*"

Daniel's family raised a little bit of everything. Every market day, they went into Lyons and sold their products at the farmer's market. To help make ends meet, six generations of Boulud women cooked for the public at Café Boulud, on the first floor of the family home.

Kitchen brigade: Boulud's lieutenants try out their new space; left to right, sous-chef Bertrand Bouquin, chef de partie Tanya Olenik, and executive chef Alex Lee.



After embraces and kisses on both cheeks, we are shown to our places at a long table in the dining porch at the rear of the house. There is slow-roasted baby goat made in an outdoor bread oven by Daniel's father, Julien. His mother, Marie (the spitting image of Daniel), serves up trembling mounds of her homemade fromage blanc studded with slivers of garlic and tossed with garden-fresh lettuce. There is roasted goose stuffed with cardoons, juicy and savory quenelles, and a gratin of creamy, soft chicken and goose livers, all made according to the recipes of Daniel's grandmother Francine. Until she was 7, Francine explains as she sits in the kitchen rocker wearing her fuzzy slippers, she spoke not French but rather the regional patois known as Dauphinois.

After the meal, Daniel, his father, and a number of brothers and friends adjourn outside for a game of petanque. Smoking cigars and cracking jokes, they toss iron balls in a pastime similar to the Italian game of bocce. In mid-match, we troop over to the storage cellar to warm ourselves with some homemade booze: plum brandy, orange liqueur, and—proving that if it lives, the French will figure out a way to eat it—a swig of the fearsome eau de vipère. It is the custom on the old farms that when a poisonous snake is caught on the grounds, it is forced into a wine bottle and drowned in eau de vie. The death throes of the serpent are said to impart a potent flavor to the beverage, which is then left to age for several years.

Daniel lived on the farm until he was 14, when he signed on as an apprentice at Nandron, a Michelin two-star restaurant just a few steps from Lyons's central market, where the great chefs of the Lyonnais-food renaissance did their marketing. There the young, eager chef-in-training got to know some of the most famous names in gastronomy. "Since I was a teenager, I had chefs like Paul Bocuse kicking my butt," Daniel recalls. "Alain Chapel would be there, too, along with Georges Blanc; also the Troisgros brothers. They would put in their orders, and while their suppliers filled up their trucks, they would go to a café on the square and sit down to a big Lyons breakfast: tripe, saucisson, fresh bread and butter, lots of coffee. They would let me hang out, and I became a familiar face. By eleven in the morning, they were on their way back to their restaurants, and I was setting up for lunch in Nandron."

Daniel spent two years at Nandron doing the scut work that befalls the low man on the kitchen totem pole. He learned knife skills, the basics of sauces, the importance of *mise-en-place*—the preparation of everything you will need before the crush of meal service. Once he'd learned all he could, Boulud asked for a recommendation to one of the great chefs he'd gotten to know on market days. Nandron suggested Georges Blanc, who was then in the process of transforming La Mère Blanc, his own mother's small café, into the three-star Georges Blanc, still regarded as one of the most romantic and best restaurants in France.

Blanc was the first of three chefs who helped form Boulud's style; all were in the vanguard of a tectonic culinary change then taking place in France. Blanc opened Boulud's eyes to the possibilities of adding elegance to basic country ingredients. Among his signature dishes was his reworking of an old peasant standby, saddle of wild hare. Instead of making a sauce of blood and brandy, the way it had been served since the nineteenth century, Blanc roasted the hare and arrayed thin-sliced meat on either side of the carcass with a wine-and-huckleberry sauce on one side of the plate and a peppery cream on the other. It was a kind of Cubist cuisine, the simultaneous presentation of different views (or in this case, different tastes) of the same ingredient.

Boulud spent two years with Blanc, then decided to continue his studies in Provence with another master, Roger Vergé, a *grand seigneur* of a man whose silver hair and full mustache suggest Marshal Foch in a chef's toque. Vergé's Moulin de Mougins was in the same village where Pablo Picasso lived and worked. The kitchen brigade came from all over France, the best and brightest of the young generation, and included the man who is now the reigning master of Parisian dining, Alain Ducasse. For Boulud, barely 19, this first trip away from Lyons was exhilarating. There were glittering parties full of movie stars and moguls out for country trips from nearby Cannes, and kitchen talk from well-traveled sous-chefs who spun tales of Manhattan's all-night discos brimming with pretty girls.

"It's not so muc
wire of the recipe and

Vergé still recalls how impressed he was by Boulud's affinity for sauces. "A good chef has to be a good *saucier* first," he explains. "You must understand their complexity, balance, and seasonings, and to know how to associate them with fish, meat, or vegetables. This is a quality that is missing in a lot of chefs today. It requires a perfectionist drive for the composition of flavors and ingredients, the impeccable cooking of each vegetable to achieve its full flavor potential. What

Daniel first indicated to me in my kitchen is a mastery of the simplest ingredients.”

BOULUD SAYS THAT WHILE BLANC taught him to look to local tradition and ingredients as the basis for his invention, it was Vergé who exposed him to what he calls “a sunnier cuisine, much more complex in its sauces and much more vegetable-oriented.”

But after three years with Vergé, Boulud was again ready for a move. He heard of an opening with Michel Guerard in the southwest, the land of truffles and foie gras. In his two years at Guerard's Les Prés d'Eugénie, Boulud was trained according to Guerard's great theoretical innovation, *cuisine minceur,* which eschewed much of the rich, flavor-enhancing fats so typical of classical French cuisine. To replace them, Guerard turned to other methods of creating flavor and texture.

“Michel Guerard played a tremendous role in what nouvelle cuisine became,” Boulud says fervently. “Other chefs might have concentrated on the look of the dish or been so minimalist with it that it was silly. His dishes could be simple in execution yet complex in taste. I think that's the key to Guerard—simplicity and complexity at the same time. Take his salade gourmand, for example. It was a green-bean salad with shaved foie gras and truffles and some white mushrooms. Very simple, but if it didn't have the perfect bean, cooked perfectly, the perfect foie gras, the perfect truffle, the result is a pretentious and lousy imitation. Every step must be precise and perfect. If you missed one step, you were dead meat. The result was a lot of tension, but good tension.”

out technique as it is about understanding the connecting
sensitive to how each ingredient hangs off that wire.”

Boulud pauses and adds, “It's not even so much about technique as it is about understanding the connecting wire of the recipe and being sensitive to how each ingredient hangs off that wire.”

During his time with Guerard, Boulud finished his apprenticeship. As a restaurateur, he would have to wait until his years with Sirio Maccioni before his front-of-the-house skills matched his expertise with pots and pans, but in his early professional career the most important step came in 1981, when he became chef to the European Commission's ambassador, Roland de Kergorlay, in Washington, D.C.

Washington proved to be a relatively easy gig. Though diplomatic dinner parties demanded precise technique and great food, they left Boulud with time to get used to a new country. When the ambassador was re-posted to Europe, Boulud, who liked the U.S., decided to stay on. Following up on a job tip from Jean-Louis Palladin, who presided over Washington's hottest restaurant (Jean-Louis at the Watergate, now closed), he applied for a position at the Polo Lounge in New York's Westbury Hotel.

He packed his car, headed north, and auditioned at an early Monday lunch. “Sometimes in your career, you are pushed against the wall and you have to defend yourself,” Boulud remembers. “I made a fifteen-course lunch to blow them away. This was a big-time job, and I wanted it, so I threw everything I knew at them.”

The Westbury management was impressed but a bit leery of Boulud's youth. He was still only 27. They hired him on the condition that he become co-chef with Patrice Boely. For the first time, Boulud was serving his farm-inspired haute cuisine recipes to New Yorkers, and he soon began to attract the attention of critics and serious eaters alike.

In this era of hyperfusion—the culinary equivalent of Phil Spector's wall of sound—Boulud cut through the clutter and presented defined, simple, and deep flavors. “What makes Daniel different from every other chef who says that his food is based on fresh local ingredients and regional fare,” says Dorothy Cann Hamilton, the founder of the French Culinary Institute, “is technique. The flavors are precise, identifiable, and at their peak.”

Susan Spicer, the chef-owner of Bayona in New Orleans, had a chance to watch him work when she was a chef-observer (known in the trade as a *stagiaire*) at Restaurant Daniel in 1994. “He has a perfect command of technique,” she says, “and that leads to depth of flavor. Sometimes he extracts flavor, sometimes he infuses it, but the techniques, the way he roasts bones to make a stock, the way he caramelizes vegetables, the way he makes a broth of salmon, all show an understanding of what you do with ingredients to get the most out of them.”

IN 1984, BOULUD BECAME HEAD CHEF at the Plaza Athénée's new restaurant, Le Régence. It was at this point that he made the best hire of his career. In need of a sous-chef, he received a tip from a friend about a young Cambodian working with Alain Passard just outside Paris at a restaurant called Duc d'Enghien. His name was Sottha Khunn, and he was a product of the kitchens of Alain Senderens and Roger Vergé.

Starter menu: Boulud's lobster salad with citrus dressing and sesame tuile.

The following year, Boulud was approached by André Soltner of Lutèce and Sirio Maccioni of Le Cirque, both trying to hire him. Soltner was the consummate chef and wanted someone who would eventually replace him at his homey townhouse restaurant. Sirio was the greatest restaurateur since Prohibition, and he needed a head chef immediately.

Daniel preferred to be master of his own kitchen rather than return to second-in-command, and thus began his six-year run at Le Cirque, *the* glittering, no-demand-is-too-hard-to-fulfill, overlit, high-ticket celebrity grazing spot. Le Cirque's run started just as New York late-night society was transforming itself from the druggy anorexia of the era of cocaine and Studio 54 to a new hedonism based on haute cuisine, expensive wine, and expanding waists.

Energized by the scene, encouraged by Sirio and assisted by Sottha, Boulud had a burst of creativity, inventing his signature scallops black tie (scallops and black truffles) and paupiette of sea bass in a Barolo-wine reduction (potato-swathed bass with a cracklingly crisp skin and a brawny yet refined sauce).

Maccioni, like Boulud, had risen from humble beginnings in a small village and had never lost his love of rustic food. One of the great results of their collaboration was the innovative step of offering peasant food to café society (a route that Sirio had already begun to travel with his former chef Alain Sailhac). Some of the food, per Sirio's Tuscan background, was Italian. Some of it was French. But it all shared a basic gutsiness: pot-au-feu, bollito misto, lard and focaccia, pigs' feet and lentils—not exactly raised-pinkie fare—part of a mix that included the most refined sauces and labor-intensive haute cuisine. Boulud's simplest inspiration was white truffles and baked potato with lots of butter and grainy sea salt. "I wanted to show Sirio that the French could do something different with the white truffle instead of the pasta and rice that the Italians used," he says. "It couldn't have had more simple ingredients. Baked potatoes always move well on an American menu, so it became a new kind of American-Italian-Lyons rustic dish." At $35 a pop, it also set a new standard in potato pricing.

It was only a matter of time before the petite, boxlike Le Cirque became too small to encompass the ambitions and egos of two big (and still growing) personalities. In the beginning, Maccioni dominated. From him, Boulud learned how to work the front of the house, how to make guests feel pampered, loved, special. Eventually, though, they became two suitors wooing the same lover—their public.

Until then, Boulud had always worked for people who took an interest in helping him to the next step in his career, even if it meant moving on to something bigger and better. For Sirio, however, what could be bigger and better than being chef at Le Cirque? "Sirio could have tapped on my shoulder and asked, 'What do you want to do with your life?' " Boulud says, still betraying a trace of rancor. "But we never had a dialogue. It's hard to have a dialogue with Sirio. Basically, you listen."

Inevitably, Boulud began to think about a restaurant of his own. He quietly set about formulating a business plan with Lili Lynton, a former Lehman Brothers mergers-and-acquisitions specialist who had given up full-time work after the birth of her second child. Joined by their attorney, Tom Danziger, they met regularly at the Three Guys Restaurant on Madison Avenue. "It was a place that served BLTs and cocktails to lonely widows at eleven in the morning," Danziger says. "There could not have been a more Sirio-free zone."

The original plan called for $2 million raised in $200,000 chunks, but when Joel Smilow was shown the projections—he is Lynton's uncle by marriage and the former chairman, CEO, and principal shareholder of Playtex—he decided to assume the whole risk. After a long search, Boulud's team settled on the ground floor of the Surrey Hotel on 76th Street. When Boulud told Sirio he was leaving, he offered to stay on for six months to insure a smooth transition, but Sirio wanted him to leave immediately.

Compliments to the chef: In Le Cirque's kitchen (1988), from left to right, first row, Roger Vergé, Gaston Le Nôtre, Boulud, and Mario Maccioni; second row, Alex Lee, Le Cirque owner Sirio Maccioni, and Paul Bocuse (1988). Opposite, Boulud with Sylvester Stallone at Restaurant Daniel (1995) and with Andy Warhol at the Plaza Athénée (1985).

IN HIS NEW SPACE, BOULUD ATTRACTED the same clientele he had at Le Cirque, but not the same critical plaudits. The room was crowded. Reservations were nearly impossible to get. Boulud had his hands full getting his kitchen up and running, and there was no Sirio to fill the front room with welcoming bonhomie. Marian Burros, in her short stint as the lead reviewer at the *Times*, took away two stars. Sizing up the situation, Boulud increased his service staff by 50 percent.

Things smoothed out. Boulud spent more time in the dining room at every service, and when he wasn't there, four strategically placed cameras allowed him to survey the room from his post in the kitchen. With the service glitches solved, his food, once again, became the main focus of his patrons' attention. In 1994, Ruth Reichl's four-star review reestablished Boulud at the top of the fine-dining food chain.

THE SUCCESS OF RESTAURANT DANIEL was not enough. Boulud still wanted the scale of the great country restaurants in which he had learned his craft, so last year Lynton and Marcel Doron, Daniel's Romanian-born CFO, developed a business plan for a larger restaurant. Earlier, Colony Capital, the Trump-assisted developers of the old Mayfair Hotel on 65th Street, had approached Boulud and several other well-known restaurateurs about opening a restaurant in the space that had housed the old Le Cirque. Boulud's team was interested, but not if the property continued as a hotel. They felt the location would be attractive only if it were a condo, so that they would not have to deal with the hotel union, a pugnacious group that drove Sirio Maccioni to close the original Le Cirque.

"Sirio could hav

do with your life?' But

Within three months, Colony made the decision to go condo, and all that remained was to settle on a price. During the short negotiation, Lynton told the Colony executives, "You might get more money if you break the space up into twelve gynecologists' offices, but is that going to be the kind of draw for your building that Daniel will be?" They made the deal.

Boulud next turned to a longtime customer, I. M. Pei, for architectural advice. Pei recommended Frank Williams, who had built the Four Seasons Hotel, the Rihga Royal, and Trump Palace. His task was to reconfigure the ground floor and basement of the Mayfair to house the infrastructure for a modern, high-technology restaurant without altering the look of the landmarked interior, which was a 1925 version of a Venetian palazzo. Daniel's specs called for increasing customer capacity in the main rooms by more than 30 percent, to 120 (compared with 90 in the old Daniel), and adding a banquet space for up to 100 guests. His dream kitchen included a $300,000 polished-steel Bonnet range as well as a six-burner induction range, three salamander top broilers, two huge plancha-style grills, and a wall-mounted rotisserie that can handle two whole suckling pigs at a time.

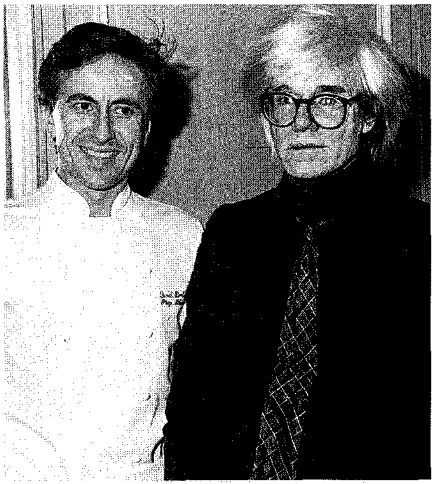
Through the summer and most of the fall, the new Restaurant Daniel took shape. The old Le Cirque has been completely gutted, along with most of the ground floor at 610 Park Avenue. The dining room where Sirio held sway is now largely given over to the banquet space, which, with its high margins, is critical if Boulud hopes to meet his revenue projections. The former lobby of the hotel has become a grand entryway that begins a procession of arches extending right into the new dining room, the original arched colonnade of which has been extended to circle the room. Naggar's interior is a combination of soft, plush fabrics with expanses of warm-toned woods. The upper lounge and entryway are furnished with velvet klismos chairs and couches with bolsters the color of pink roses veined with gold.

The restaurant won't open officially until mid-January, but a string of private events have been scheduled, somewhat optimistically, throughout December, and in the days leading up to the first preview meal, I watch the space being transformed from construction site to soigné salon.

Last Tuesday, an hour before guests are to arrive for the first dinner, the 747 whoosh of industrial vacuum cleaners competes with Tom Petty's "Free Fallin' " blasting from a boom box. Boulud and his crew frantically prepare for a charity event thrown by Joel Smilow for the Board of Governors of the Boys and Girls Clubs of America. Colin Powell will be among the guests.

It is literally not until that moment, as the final touches take shape before our eyes, that Naggar's renderings become real and I finally get a fix on a feeling I have had since Daniel and I took our 80,000-calorie ride from Paris to Lyons. The new Restaurant Daniel—in the generosity of space, in the layout of the rooms, in the capacious lounges and the ease and comfort of the furniture—gives me a sense of déjà vu.

"Daniel," I say, "it feels a lot like Georges Blanc's place in Vonnas."



pped on my shoulder and asked, 'What do you want to
rd to have a dialogue with Sirio. Basically, you listen."

He looks up, staring at nothing in particular. "I never thought of it that way," he says dreamily as he conjures up the restaurant that as a teenager he helped Blanc create. *"C'est vrai* . . . You may be right."

It all made sense now. Daniel Boulud has finally come home.

TWENTY-FIVE MINUTES LATER, BOULUD takes command of his new kitchen and dining room for the very first time. Construction detritus is still being dragged out to curbside Dumpsters. Curtains are being hung while new furniture, still wrapped in plastic, is carried into the lounge. Naggar unfurls a Tibetan checkerboard area rug. Daniel gives last-minute instructions to the wait staff and the entire kitchen crew, who have shown up for their first look-see just minutes before.

Usually a kitchen gets a shakedown cruise and the stoves get a day or two of "burning in" before the chef tries even a tentative first meal. Not this restaurant. Boulud and his brigade must prepare their first meal alongside Vladislav Kamikovski's kitchen-equipment team, who are brandishing screwdrivers, voltage meters, and needle-nose pliers while scurrying around, under, and behind the stoves, the rotisseries, and the momentarily recalcitrant induction oven. They are at their posts through the entire night—kind of like having an auto mechanic work on your engine while you take the car for a test drive.

As the guests take their seats in the dining room, Boulud himself slams the first two pans down on the virgin Bonnet stove, carrots in one, leeks in the other. He flips the vegetables with two flicks of the wrist, propelling them skyward in a mass full gainer.

"We need another table in here . . . *bigtime!"* he shouts, and two waiters vault into the dining room, returning instantly with a table that they set in front of the huge yellow ceramic surface where Daniel will supervise the plating of each course.

"The plates! *Vit,"* he coughs, and, rather than wait for someone to do it, he sprints to the back of the kitchen and removes a stack of 40 dinner plates from the warming oven. He carries them through a slalom course of sous-chefs and line cooks, securing the stack with his chin like a librarian carrying too many books.

Second-in-command Alex Lee composes a plate with the first course, Maine-lobster salad on a bed of avocado. Around the edge he places dots of sauce between pieces of clementine and sweet lemon bits.

"Like this," says Alex. "Got it?"

"Let's get everyone in here. I want 60 out . . . *tout suite* . . . move it!" Daniel adds, as five more chefs in white tunics race up from the prep kitchen downstairs.

The assembly line works in quiet precision, Daniel giving a last adjustment to every composition. Suddenly he looks up, puzzled.

"What time is it? How do I know if we are on time? *Merde!* We need a good clock: Toto!"

Toto Ourzdine, Daniel's go-to guy for everything, runs in and answers, "I have three. Tomorrow I'll hang them."

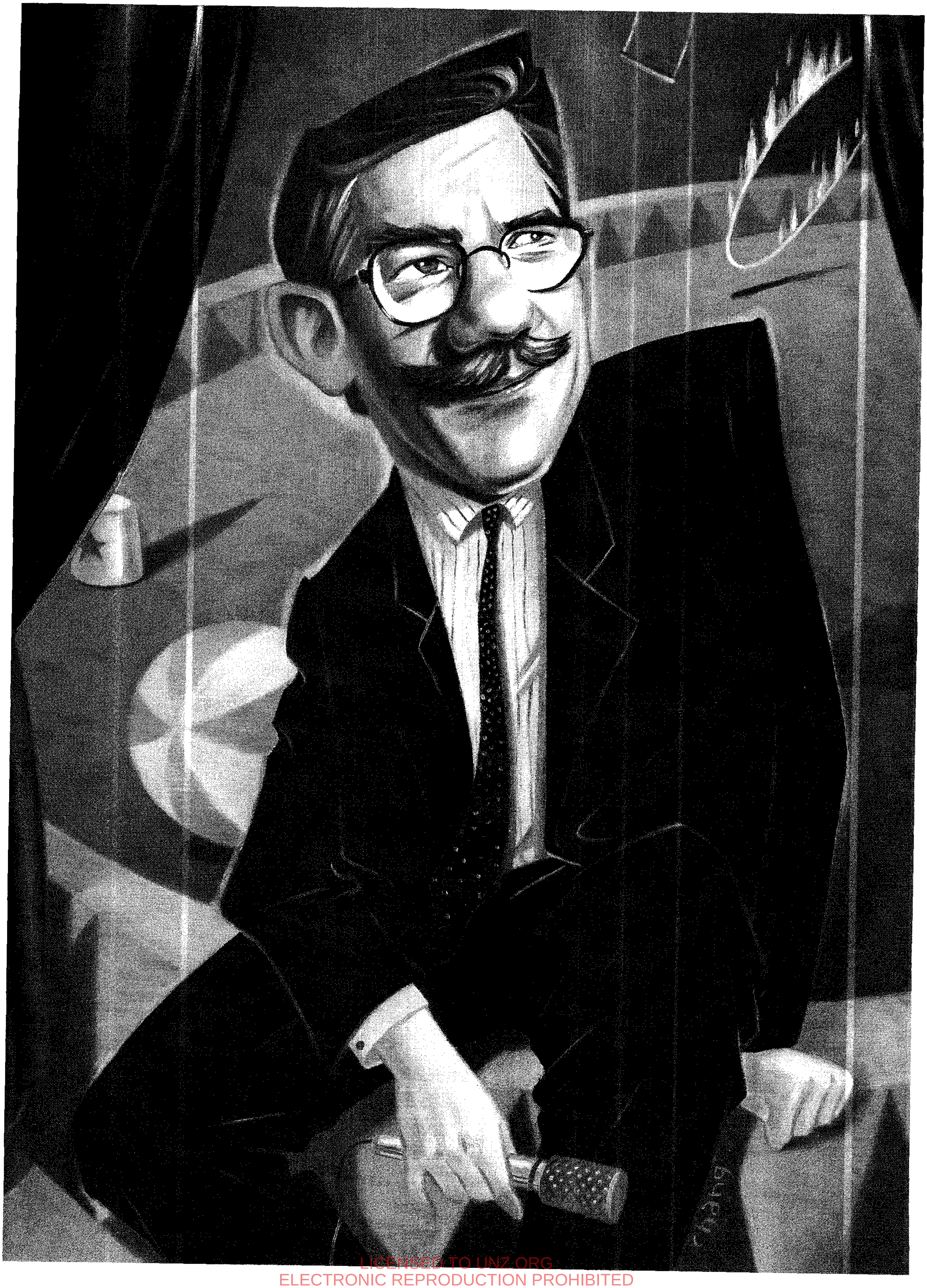
The salad leaves for the dining room, followed by peppered black sea bass with shallot confit in a port sauce. Right behind that, slices of roasted saddle of lamb with black-truffle gnocchi and root vegetables with a satiny, rich jus are dispatched to the tune of Daniel's drill-sergeant encouragement.

When he discovers that one table has been missed, his face clouds over and he unleashes a streak of pungent, untranslatable French expletives that kick the wait staff into warp speed. His explosion is audible in the dining room, but the storm passes quickly and he is back at work, putting the last precise touches on the dessert, a chocolate-hazelnut cake with nougatine ice cream (think Heath Bar Crunch with a French accent).

"Not bad," Daniel tells his crew. "Of course, I would like it smoother, but very good for a first run. Tomorrow we do 120. We won't make the same mistakes."

"What will be on the menu?" I ask.

He shrugs. "We'll have to see what looks good in the market."



GERALDO'S LAST LAUGH

JUST WHEN GERALDO RIVERA SCORED A $36 MILLION NBC CONTRACT AND A SHOT AT NETWORK LEGITIMACY, HE CAME OUT AS BILL CLINTON'S PASSIONATE PRIME-TIME DEFENDER, DRIVING HIS ALREADY SCORNFUL BRETHREN MAD. DOES BROADCASTING'S OUTLAW REALLY WANT TO JOIN THE ESTABLISHMENT, OR IS HE HAVING TOO MUCH FUN BEING HIMSELF?

BY DAVID BROCK

ILLUSTRATION BY MICHELLE CHANG

LATE LAST SUMMER, AS THE TITANS OF NEW York's insular media world were sharpening their knives for NBC's newest golden boy, Geraldo Rivera threw a party. As the sun set over Buzzards Bay in Marion, Massachusetts, just off Cape Cod, about a hundred guests gathered on the immaculate green lawn of Seagate, Rivera's postcard-perfect waterfront summer estate. Sipping gin-and-tonics and mingling quietly, the well-heeled men and women, edging toward retirement age, were uniformly fair-haired, deeply tanned, and clad in bright-lime-green-and-pink plaids. Blue-blazered NBC president Bob Wright, who flew in from Nantucket by helicopter and landed on the back lawn, blended right in. The only incongruities in the genteel Wasp setting were a mammoth margarita machine, a live band blaring music from the disco era, and the host himself, the mustachioed Rivera, sporting orange wraparound

Ray-Bans and crammed into a pair of conspicuously tight pants.

Rivera and his ebullient, red-headed wife, C.C., ("my Wasp wife," he calls her), had opened their home to raise funds for a $125 million redevelopment project in nearby New Bedford, a depressed port city with a substantial Portuguese population. Later that evening, as we took in the party from the roof of his well-appointed house, Geraldo surveyed the choppy bay to the east and, to the west, a lush, exclusive golf course just across the gravel road. "I'd play," he complained sadly, "if only they'd let me into the club."

It was a typical performance: melodramatic, laced with indignation, a bit comic, and almost poignant, until it became clear that Geraldo had never really considered joining the club at all. Although he has a golf tournament named after him in New Jersey—where he lives in affluent Rumson with C.C. and their two young daughters—hitting little white balls bores him stiff. When the pumped-up 55-year-old is not sailing, boxing, or lifting weights, he plays tennis at another club in town. Which raises the question that could just as well apply to his much-speculated-upon career ambitions at NBC News: Does Geraldo Rivera, described by Los Angeles *Times* television critic Howard Rosenberg as "one of the very best talk-show impresarios on the planet," *really* want in? Or does he prize his outsider status as image-defining shtick? Not even Geraldo seems to know for sure.

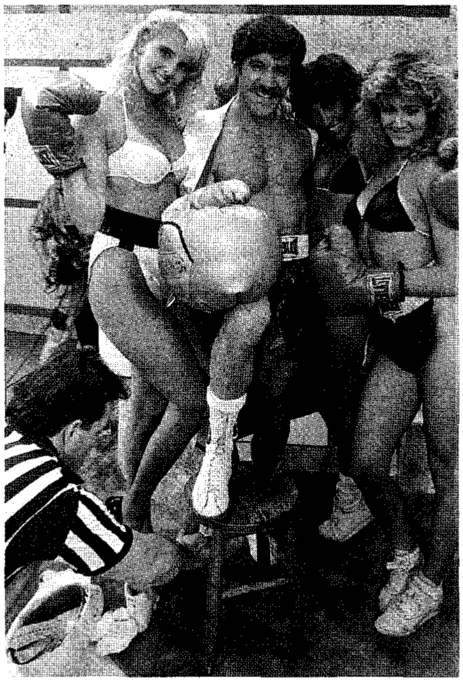
ON ONE LEVEL, THE MAN WHO VIRTUally invented tabloid television a decade ago with his trashy syndicated *Geraldo* show seems to be waging a calculated campaign to shed his reputation as "the Rodney Dangerfield of broadcast journalism," in the words of his senior producer, Steve North, and win the acceptance of his pious peers and sneering critics. Donning horn-rimmed glasses and scrutinizing court documents with his "depo-cam" as the host of CNBC's *Rivera Live* during the O. J. Simpson trial, Rivera showed viewers that he is both a sharp lawyer and a first-rate journalist, scoring exclusives with the Brown and Goldman families and breaking the contents of O.J.'s civil deposition. With its combination of sex, violence, race, and thorny legal issues, the story seemed tailor-made for Rivera. *Rivera Live* soon became CNBC's top-rated prime-time show, and as the anchor of its prime-time lineup, the show helped bring the once-troubled cable network to wide distribution and huge profits (*Rivera Live* alone brings in about $10 million a year).

A year later, during the all-Monica-all-the-time cable-ratings wars, *Rivera Live* has outpaced any offering on CNBC or its sister cable network, MSNBC, including the evening newscast with Brian Williams, the presumptive heir to Tom Brokaw's anchor seat. For well over a million viewers addicted to the finer legal and political points of the Lewinsky scandal, Rivera's nightly dissection of Ken Starr's sex-and-lies inquiry has been appointment television—the best-produced, newsiest, and most probing talk show on the air. His niche as President Clinton's sole stalwart defender in prime time has distinguished him from the pack. Time and again, Rivera's journalistic instincts—from seriously pursuing the "right-wing conspiracy" to pointing out the political implications of the racial divide on the scandal—have proved prescient. In a media sea of scolds and hysterics, Geraldo Rivera has emerged as the voice of reason.

Rivera's show has been attracting twice as many viewers in recent weeks as it did at this time last year—fueling CNBC's challenge to CNN, still the leading cable news network by far. In the first three quarters of 1998, CNBC's household viewership was up 43 percent over the same period last year, while CNN's rose by only 11 percent. "As long as the market and the president's libido is up, so is CNBC," jokes Bob Reichblum, the CNBC exec in charge of prime-time programming.

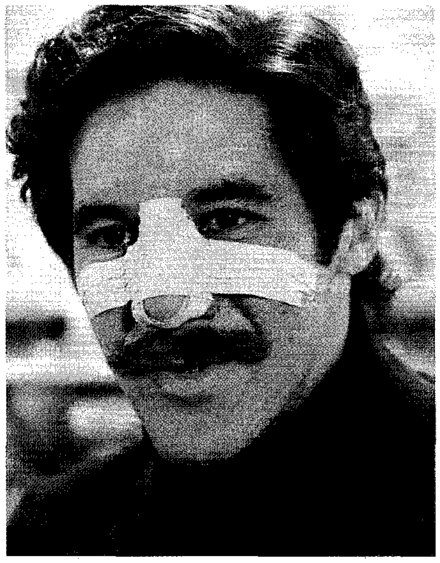
But now that the Clinton story is just about played out, Rivera, who has bolstered his role at CNBC with a visible new post at NBC News, personifies the challenge of every talking head on the air: How will he keep his audience and profile in a post-Monica media world and return to regular news? Will a man who thrives on adrenaline-laced over-the-top megastories still deliver for NBC covering more standard fare? Or will he be a $36 million P. T. Barnum without much of a show?

THE PROSPECT DOESN'T SEEM TO TROUBLE network news chiefs, who were recently embroiled in a full-scale bidding war to bring the outcast newsman back into the network fold. Last December, after a secret meeting with ABC president David Westin about the possibility of his taking over *Good Morning America* (Rivera turned down the offer) and then a very public flirtation with Rupert Murdoch's Fox News Channel, Rivera signed a five-year, $36 million contract with NBC. The deal guaranteed him a news-anchor slot at CNBC and, for the first time since he was pushed out of ABC's *20/20* in 1985, brought him under the much-coveted umbrella of a network news division.



"MY COLLEAGUES LOOK ASKA

LINE. I'M A VOICE IN THE WILD



The Rivera juggernaut took off in July, when NBC's *Today* show gave him a plum assignment covering Clinton's historic trip to China, enraging foreign correspondent

Photographs: clockwise from top, AP/Wide World; Richard Drew/AP/Wide World; AP/Wide World.

Andrea Mitchell, who was bumped from the trip. Rivera's high-stakes comeback effort accelerated in late August with the debut of *Upfront Tonight,* a half-hour newscast airing on CNBC at 7:30 P.M. that he co-hosts with former *Hard Copy* reporter Diane Dimond. The broadcast, which has exceeded initial ratings projections and drawn fair reviews, relies heavily on NBC news packages and its Washington correspondents.

Rivera's rehabilitation culminated last month with the debut of *The Geraldo Rivera Specials,* a series of prime-time documentaries produced by NBC News in which Rivera reprises his seventies WABC *Eyewitness News* persona as a crusading street reporter. The first special, *Blacks and Blue,* examined tensions between the police and the black community in Pittsburgh and topped its time slot in the ratings. Rivera confirms that while NBC News president Andy Lack and Don Ohlmeyer, the head of NBC's entertainment division in Los Angeles, shot down the idea of his hosting a weekly Sunday-night in-studio talk show to go up against *60 Minutes,* he's still gunning for the slot: He views the documentaries as a first step in ultimately persuading the network to let him take on the venerable, high-rated CBS news magazine.

ME BECAUSE I'M OUT OF THE MAINSTREAM," BRISTLES GERALDO. "I'LL *NEVER* BE ON *DATE-*
. BUT TWENTY YEARS FROM NOW, I'LL BE SEEN AS ONE OF THE FEW WHO WERE RIGHT."

Clockwise from above, Rivera on the set of his new CNBC show, *Upfront Tonight*; after his notorious nose-breaking by neo-Nazis; with *Geraldo* guest Malcolm Forbes; and with female boxers in 1988.

Still, Rivera has a long row to hoe before he can shed his negative journalistic rap, even within his own network. A Rivera ally close to the negotiations with NBC says the deal was essentially forced on Lack, who "hates Geraldo's guts," by corporate bigwigs who were willing to make what some saw as a Faustian bargain to keep their money-making star happy. Rivera will say only that "Andy came up with the money and fought a lot of intramural battles. He should be credited. It's not easy being in my corner." (Through a spokesman, Lack says he supported bringing Rivera to the network.) Rivera then ran afoul of Tom Brokaw by seeming to suggest in a *TV Guide* interview that he wanted Brokaw's job. Rivera insists he meant to say only that unlike Brokaw, he was part of a new breed of anchor who does more than "read a script." (Brokaw, who has suggested that Rivera would never be welcome on the evening news, now declines to comment on Rivera.) NBC White House correspondent David Bloom won't appear live on any Rivera broadcast because he doesn't want to "get beat up by Geraldo," according to one NBC exec. The feeling is mutual. One evening off-air, Rivera referred to NBC reporter David Gregory as a "slightly less-well-informed guest."

Then there was the flap in August when Rivera broke the story that an FBI laboratory had found "human genetic material" on the dress that Monica Lewinsky had turned over to Starr. After the show that night, which beat out CNN's *Larry King* in the ratings, an increasingly common occurrence, a celebratory Rivera, flanked by a retinue of friends and his publicist, stopped by Elaine's for a drink and a few forkfuls of fried calamari. "This could really be it, a major step for me," he told me. Drawing on his sense of what Hollywood calls "the three-second I.D.," he volunteered: "Instead of your story being 'Outlaw Comes to the Network,' it could be 'Geraldo Rivera, Journalist!' " Then he dramatically excused himself to answer queries from the wires, *Nightline,* and the New York *Post.*

Little did he know that as he was mouthing the word *journalist,* NBC News was busy disavowing Rivera's "scoop" in an in-house bulletin to all bureaus that soon leaked out and got plenty of ink. Howard Kurtz, the respected Washington *Post* media critic, accused the network of maintaining a double standard for Rivera, allowing him to go with a story that no NBC correspondent could get on the air without further corroboration. "He's our loose cannon," one NBC executive told me in the heat of the controversy. Two weeks later, of course, Rivera, who says he did check out the story "to the extent possible" with the FBI, was fully vindicated. His critics didn't notice. Three months later, the incident still rankles Rivera. As he combs out his mustache in the makeup room one evening, he complains cockily, "That story was widely disbelieved, *widely.* I'll never be honored in my time."

But the story of Rivera's bid "to climb the food chain of media respectability," as talk-radio host Don Imus gibes, isn't so simple. One contradiction in Rivera's career is that the unorthodox style he would have to shed to join the press club—his passionate advocacy, his showbizzy sense of how to grab the viewer, his ability to insert himself into the drama, and his tweaking of network suits—is exactly what has made him a hot media commodity for three decades. Rivera knows that if NBC suddenly "honored" him, Geraldo wouldn't be Geraldo anymore.

The other contradiction is that the very media culture that still wants to shun Rivera has, to a remarkable extent, been defined by him. From the spread of hybrid news magazines (of which he created one of the first, ABC's *Good Night America,* in 1973) to the profusion of legal talking-head shows to the increasing tabloid bent in news to the blurring distinction between reporter and commentator, Rivera was there before the industry was.

If Rivera ever achieves his lofty goal of being seen as "one of the Wise Men of my generation," it will be on no one's terms but his own. When asked what he most admires about Geraldo, his brother, Craig Rivera, a correspondent for *Inside Edition,* responds, "His balls, quite frankly." Indeed, at the very moment that he is poised to win readmission to the network fraternity, Rivera's pro-Clinton position in the Lewinsky scandal is destined to seal his renegade status in the news business, which prides itself on neutrality and regards the words *Clinton apologist* as a deadly epithet.

"When I did O.J., I was able to bite my tongue until the verdict came in," Geraldo says. "But on this one, I couldn't." That, of course, is an understatement. "He doesn't want to be 'accepted' in that way," insists Craig Rivera. "He just wants to please his audience. And if what he does gets him accepted, fine." Ultimately, Rivera wants it both ways. He wants respect as a journalist and the freedom to operate outside the confines of "respectable" journalism.

Rivera's defense of Clinton has been anything but anchorly. In Rivera's lexicon, Clinton is "a horny middle-aged guy condemned for ten blow jobs," Starr is a "sex-obsessed prosecutor" peddling "hearsay crap," House GOP leaders Dick Armey and Tom DeLay are "haters," and Con-

Photograph courtesy of CNBC.

gressman Dan Burton is "Dan 'Scumbag' Burton, father of an illegitimate child."

RIVERA INSISTS THAT HIS COLLEAGUES are "just as biased as I am" but won't admit it. During his high-profile trip to China, Rivera skewered the Washington *Post* and *Newsweek* as "sex-obsessed sister publications" that have been "suckling leaks from the breast of . . . Ken Starr." On a recent *Rivera Live,* Rivera became so impassioned in demanding that the New York *Times* apologize to Clinton for its incessant coverage of the Whitewater scandal that he threw his note cards at the camera and went to an early break. "My wife yelled at me for losing it," he says. Another time, he railed against the "pretense and hypocrisy" of those who set themselves up as moral arbiters, referring to "a network anchor and his White House reporter" who have been "married eight times between them." (Off-air, he says he was talking about ABC's Peter Jennings and Sam Donaldson.) On the *Today* show, where he appears as an NBC "legal analyst," his friend Katie Couric upbraided Rivera for his lack of balance.

Certainly, eyebrows would be raised at NBC if his bosses knew, as Rivera confesses, that he also offers political advice to the Clinton team privately while reporting the story. "They try out ideas on me and see what my reaction to it is," he says. "There was a time when I thought they had lost their courage, they were droopy and scared. I stiffened them up." Far from being repentant about his bias, Rivera charges that his view of the scandal as a sexual witch hunt is impeding his career at NBC News. NBC executives, he says, have "shot down" his proposal to do a Clinton-scandal special on the network. "My colleagues look askance because I'm out of the mainstream," he bristles. "I'll *never* be on *Dateline.* I'm a voice in the wilderness. But twenty years from now, I'll be seen as one of the few who were right." In the midst of his tirade, Rivera makes a point to note, "I don't even have an NBC I.D. The guards let me in the building because they all speak Spanish."

IN 1972, THE CHARISMATIC CUB REPORTER FLIRTED WITH THE NOTION OF RUNNING FOR CONG

INGS WITH POLITICOS," SAYS A FRIEND. "HE THOUGHT HE WOULD CARRY BOTH THE JEWISH VO

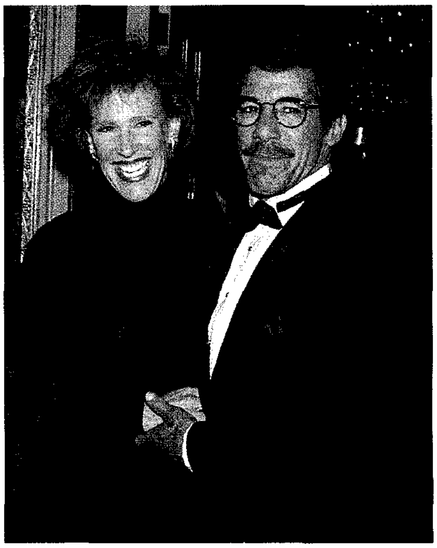
Marty Berman, Rivera's longtime producer on the daytime show, says he has tried to persuade Rivera to hold his tongue with the press, but "he's a girl who can't say no." "Geraldo's honest, and sometimes it gets him in trouble," adds his former *20/20* colleague Barbara Walters, recently described by Rivera in *Playboy* as having "nice tits." "After the *Playboy* interview, I called him and said you've given me a whole new image. We used to kid a lot back then, and I used to tell *him* if he was ever ready for older women to give me a call."

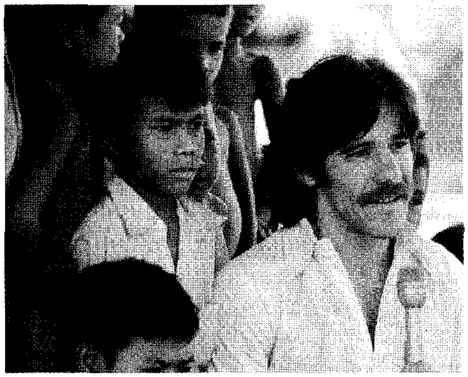
The *Playboy* interview points up another undeniable aspect of Rivera's persona that makes him an unlikely network standard bearer: He's cheesy. While fans see it as part of his charm, one frequent guest on *Rivera Live* confesses to wincing occasionally: "He's got this Long Island, pinkie-ring, Al D'Amato thing going that can be pretty awful." Greeting former Newt Gingrich press secretary Tony Blankley on *Rivera Live* after the November election, Geraldo smirked, "Tony, I love ya, but you got your butt kicked the other night, man." He signs off every night by kissing two fingers and making a peace sign. His not-ready-for-prime-time Perry Ellis wardrobe of big-shouldered, double-breasted suit coats is widely derided by his NBC colleagues.

Not surprisingly, Rivera's close friends all seem to come not from the ranks of the media elite to which he has ascended but from earlier parts of his life, a motley, protective posse that includes Cheech Marin of Cheech & Chong; Brooklyn Law School chum Jerry Shargel, now John Gotti's lawyer; and a few yes-man producers who've been with him since the tabloid days. Most nights after the show, they head to Elaine's or Miss Elle's, an Upper West Side dive Rivera proudly informs me is "owned by three dykes" (a statement that later mystifies the bar's sole, heterosexual owner). He then drives back to Rumson in a black Bentley, fit for, well, John Gotti.

Although Rivera has seemed to re-invent himself almost as often as Madonna, he really hasn't changed a whit. Born Gerald Rivera to a Jewish mother and a Puerto Rican father, he grew up the oldest of four siblings in West Babylon, Long Island. According to Los Angeles lawyer Victor Furio, who met Rivera when they worked together one summer on a city maintenance crew, Rivera's father, Allen, who had emigrated from Puerto Rico as a young man and worked in the cafeteria of a local defense contractor, instilled in Geraldo his brimming self-confidence. "His dad didn't have a very sophisticated job, but he was a proud guy who had been class valedictorian back in Puerto Rico," Furio says. "Geraldo was the Robin Hood, Sir Lancelot and Don Juan of his day. He had aspirations to be a superhero." At the same time, says longtime friend Marty Berman, "With his mixed heritage, he had a sense of never fitting in in either place."

Rivera attended the New York Maritime Academy—to this day, he often commutes the 25 miles to work in Fort Lee, New Jersey, from Rumson on his speedboat—and then went on to the University of Arizona and Brooklyn Law School, where for three years he sat next to Jerry Shargel. "I told my fiancée in 1966 that this is the smartest guy I ever met," says Shargel. After a summer in the Manhattan D.A.'s office, Rivera embarked on a career as a long-haired, left-leaning legal-aid lawyer, working with a Puerto Rican activist group, the Young Lords, whom he often represented in television interviews. Even then he demonstrated the strange mix of intellectual ability and louche theatrics that has dominated his career. "He wanted to have an impact," says Craig Rivera, describing his brother's "romanticized notion" of himself. "He wanted to be a great man."





Clockwise from above, reporting from Southeast Asia in 1979; with his "Wasp wife" C.C.; with Marcia Clark in 1997; and revisiting Willowbrook in 1981.

Photographs: top, Gregory Pace/Sygma; bottom, the Everett Collection.

Rivera admits that his heroes tend to be "overdrawn and overly romantic. I think of the great historical swashbucklers, the Lawrence of Arabia types."

In 1970, the telegenic attorney was spotted by the news director of WABC, who offered him a job as a reporter, but not before suggesting that Gerald change his name to Geraldo to exploit his Hispanic roots. From the start, he had difficulty balancing journalistic notions of objectivity with his personal passion. In 1972, he was suspended from the station for his vocal support of George McGovern's presidential candidacy. In a subsequent effort to embarrass Rivera, a conservative radio-show host put out the false story that Rivera's surname was actually Rivers, painting him as an ethnic opportunist.

ROM WILLIAMSBURG, BROOKLYN. "THERE WERE SERIOUS MEET-

THE PUERTO RICAN VOTE, WHICH IS A MAJORITY IN NEW YORK."

Ironically, Rivera says he met with real discrimination at WABC, an experience that still colors his perception of how the mostly white, square-jawed media Establishment views him. "Nobody wanted to work with this Puerto Rican kid who they had sent to journalism school," says Berman, then a film editor at the station. Yet Rivera's identity, says Danny Schechter, who worked with him as a producer at *20/20,* "also put him in the role of ethnic hero, which he couldn't comfortably fill, either, because he wasn't really from [the barrio]."

Rivera made his reputation in 1972 with a blockbuster report on the appalling conditions inside the Willowbrook State School on Staten Island, then the nation's largest facility for the mentally retarded, which was eventually closed by the state of New York as a result of his report. "Willowbrook is one of the things, along with some others he's *not* so proud of, that will be on his tombstone," says Berman.

The Willowbrook publicity made Rivera an instant celebrity in New York, and the charismatic cub reporter briefly flirted with the notion of running for Congress from the Williamsburg, Brooklyn, district where he was born. "There were serious meetings with politicos," says Berman. "He thought he would carry the Jewish vote and the Puerto Rican vote, which is a majority in New York City." But Jerry Shargel says "the glamour and money" of a television career proved a stronger pull. By day, Rivera was reporting on migrant workers in New Jersey, child heroin addicts in East Harlem, and the Yom Kippur war. By night, he was partying at Studio 54 with Andy Warhol, Rudolph Nureyev, and Mick Jagger. The Avenue C townhouse that he shared with the second of his four wives, Kurt Vonnegut's daughter Edie, became "the site of unsurpassed parties," as Shargel delicately puts it.

After stints as a correspondent for *Good Morning America* and the *ABC Evening News,* Rivera worked for eight years at *20/20,* where he exposed the harms of Agent Orange and domestic dioxin, traveled behind the lines in Laos with anti-Vietnamese rebels, traced the trafficking of heroin from the Afghan border to the streets of New York, and, in 1983, did the first network treatment of the AIDS crisis.

Then, in 1985, Rivera publicly slammed the decision of ABC News president Roone Arledge—his longtime friend and mentor—to kill another reporter's story linking JFK to Marilyn Monroe. Amid the turmoil, Rivera's associate producer and then girlfriend, C. C. Dyer, was caught using an ABC messenger to score marijuana for a friend. Both Geraldo and C.C. wound up leaving the network. Eighteen months later, Geraldo married C.C., who now works as a publisher of *The Two River Times,* a Rivera-owned weekly crusading newspaper in Redbank, New Jersey. "It's still an open wound," Rivera says of that period. "Roone and I saw each other at Fred Friendly's funeral recently. It scars both our professional records. For him, it was a unique misstep in an otherwise flawless career. [For me] it was suicidal, self-destructive." But as Barbara Walters points out, the setback didn't deter Rivera. "We all thought it was very unfortunate when he left. He was exiled and unhappy, but he made a lot of money," she says. "And he ended up with a career that is much larger than if he had stayed as a *20/20* correspondent."

Financially strapped after being fired from *20/20* ("He went broke after each of his three divorces," says one friend), Rivera grabbed the first lucrative offer that came his way: hosting the live excavation of the private vault of Depression-era mobster Al Capone. The vault was empty, leaving Rivera humiliated, but the show won the highest ratings ever for a syndicated special. Soon, he was hosting two shows of his own, the daytime *Geraldo* show and the syndicated news program *Now It Can Be Told.* Both were ratings magnets roundly trashed by critics.

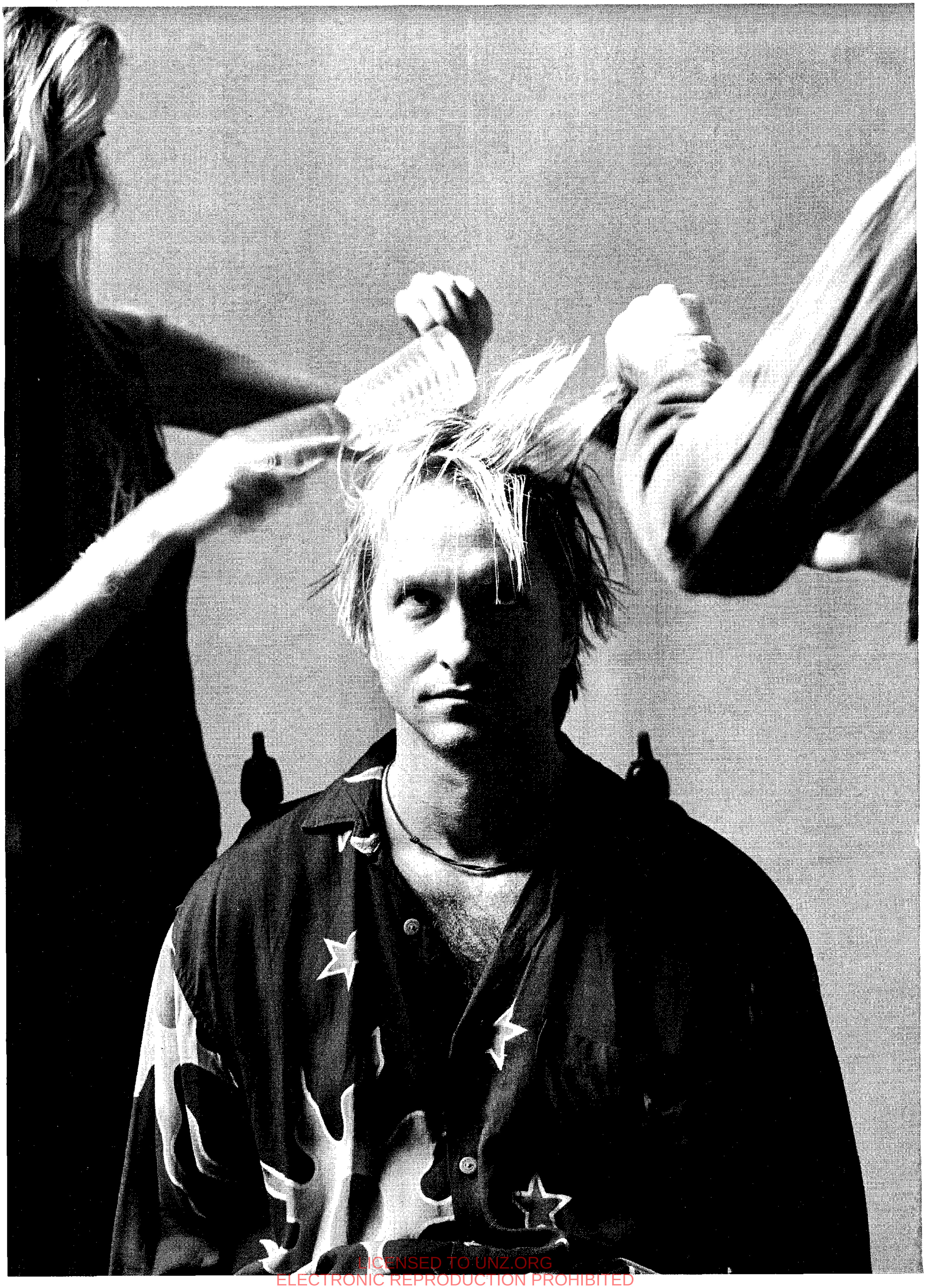
Rivera is the first to admit that as tabloid television went down-market, he descended further, hosting a show from a nudist colony, mud-wrestling a woman, having fat from his ass implanted into his forehead. But even then he continued to do some excellent journalism—such as airing the first report on the dangers of silicone breast implants. Even the notorious *Geraldo* episode in which skinheads smashed a chair into Rivera's face and broke his nose was actually intended as a serious look at hate groups in America.

NOTHING DID MORE TO MAR RIVERA'S reputation than the 1991 publication of his breathless, aptly named autobiography, *Exposing Myself.* Fearful that a writer for *Reader's Digest* was working on an unauthorized book about him, Rivera typically decided to strike first. "His agent, his wife, and I all told him not to do it," says Marty Berman. "What he did to himself was worse than what anyone would have done. If a movie star wrote it, that would be one thing. But for a newsman, it wasn't gallant. It was macho-asshole." Rivera provided intimate details of his extramarital affairs with Marian Javits, wife of former New York senator Jacob Javits; Margaret Trudeau; and Bette Midler, among others.

Needless to say, the memoir provided fodder for the tabloids and late-night comedians. Though Rivera now says he regrets writing the book, there is a sense in which he was

(continued on page 88)

Photographs: top, Lee Celano/Reuters/Archive Photos; bottom, Bob Sacha/ABC.



His latest tale, *Word*, is a jazzy, ironic appreciation of writing, filmmaking, and chasing skirt. In two of those arts, at least, downtown novelist Coerte v. w. Felske seems more than passingly adept.

A Model Wordsmith

BY VANESSA GRIGORIADIS

IT'S AN UNEXPECTEDLY HOT, STICKY NIGHT IN LATE NOvember, and though the police are trying to persuade the hundreds of revelers gathered around the iron gates of Joe's Pub to move along, inside the three-week-old Lafayette Street club a wild party is in full swing. Pink and red spotlights swirl over the sunken dance floor as models in backless dresses dance to Abba with the men who love them—arch-rivals Donald Trump and Roffredo Gaetano; photographer Sante D'Orazio; tank-topped club impresarios Jeffrey Jah, Mark Baker, and Nur Khan; and a couple of well-known gossip columnists. An open-shirted Kevin Costner takes a breather in a banquette with Chuck Pfeiffer, Bob Shaye, and Peter Brant; from their table nearby, Emma S., Kara Young, and a few more models edging over 30 wriggle their fingers seductively in greeting. A movie premiere? A supermodel's birthday? No, it's a book party.

But one befitting Coerte v. w. Felske, the 38-year-old author of 1995's *The Shallow Man* and the upcoming *Word,* both of which are taut, clever character studies centered on this posse of older roués and slightly over-the-hill models—all of whom the author considers close friends, the kind who come over for late-night glasses of port in the SoHo apartment he shares with gallery director Michiel van der Waal, brother to Frederique, and whichever South African or Dutch or Italian models are passing through town. That is, when he's not in Quogue playing tennis with Taki, or in St. Tropez with his new Czech-Croatian girlfriend who lives in Switzerland, or hanging out in L.A. at Monkey Bar with his old friend Jack Nicholson, who helped arrange for the filming of *The Shallow Man* (for protagonists, Felske's thinking "Pitt, Penn, Downey, DiCaprio, or Cage").

With his surfer's patois, a mellow constitution that he chalks up to being a Libra, and a practiced way of speaking similar to Mister Rogers's, Felske is beloved by all: a guy's guy and a model's guy, whose novels neatly refract their own lives through a highly ironic prism. He does take his shots at ponytailed, Vespa-riding, mannequin-addicted, SoHo-loft-living thirtysomethings who are hand models by day and party promoters by night. But Felske sympathizes with the dudes at the end, attributing their flaws to societal shortcomings and a general millennial ill will.

In Felske's world, models are called Thing (young ones are Baby Thing, stupid ones are Dialtones); the rest of womankind are Civilians. His girlfriends are Catsuit Feminists, and we, Generation Face, all live in the notoriety-obsessed Age of A (for Astonishment). His characters often think in these terms; what's more, their feelings are italicized: "*No one wants to be sentenced to life at someone else's table. . . . I want the reservation in my own name. I want my own table and I want to fill it with whomever I fancy.*" Less self-consciously writerly than other colleagues who are concerned with this tribe, like Bret Easton Ellis or Jay McInerney, Felske confides that he writes his books in only a few weeks. "It's all about the voice," he says, often, as if it were a mantra.

Just tonight, Felske comes up with a theory he calls the Ten-Year Window. "Women only have the years from 20 to 30 to really do it up," he says, taking a seat at the bar next to Joaquin Phoenix. "For some, maybe 24 to 34." How to take this comment, delivered, to all appearances, by a guy who's apparently spent a little too much time with Things and not enough with Civilians? Auditing women's-studies classes while a grad student at Columbia's film school, he tells me, qualifies him as a feminist—yet he suggests that women are different from men because they're "ruled by the moon." Oh.

As a samba band tunes up onstage at Joe's, a sunglasses-wearing Ralph Lauren model named Zofia jumps up on a table near the D.J. booth. "God, do I adore Coerte, he is *so* wise," she announces, narrowly avoiding the approaching gang of Felske's high-school buddies, who smother him with bear hugs and painful-looking noogies. "This dude," gurgles the beefiest one, grabbing him by an Armani lapel, "was so popular with chicks in high school that cheerleaders from the *other* team were asking for his number."

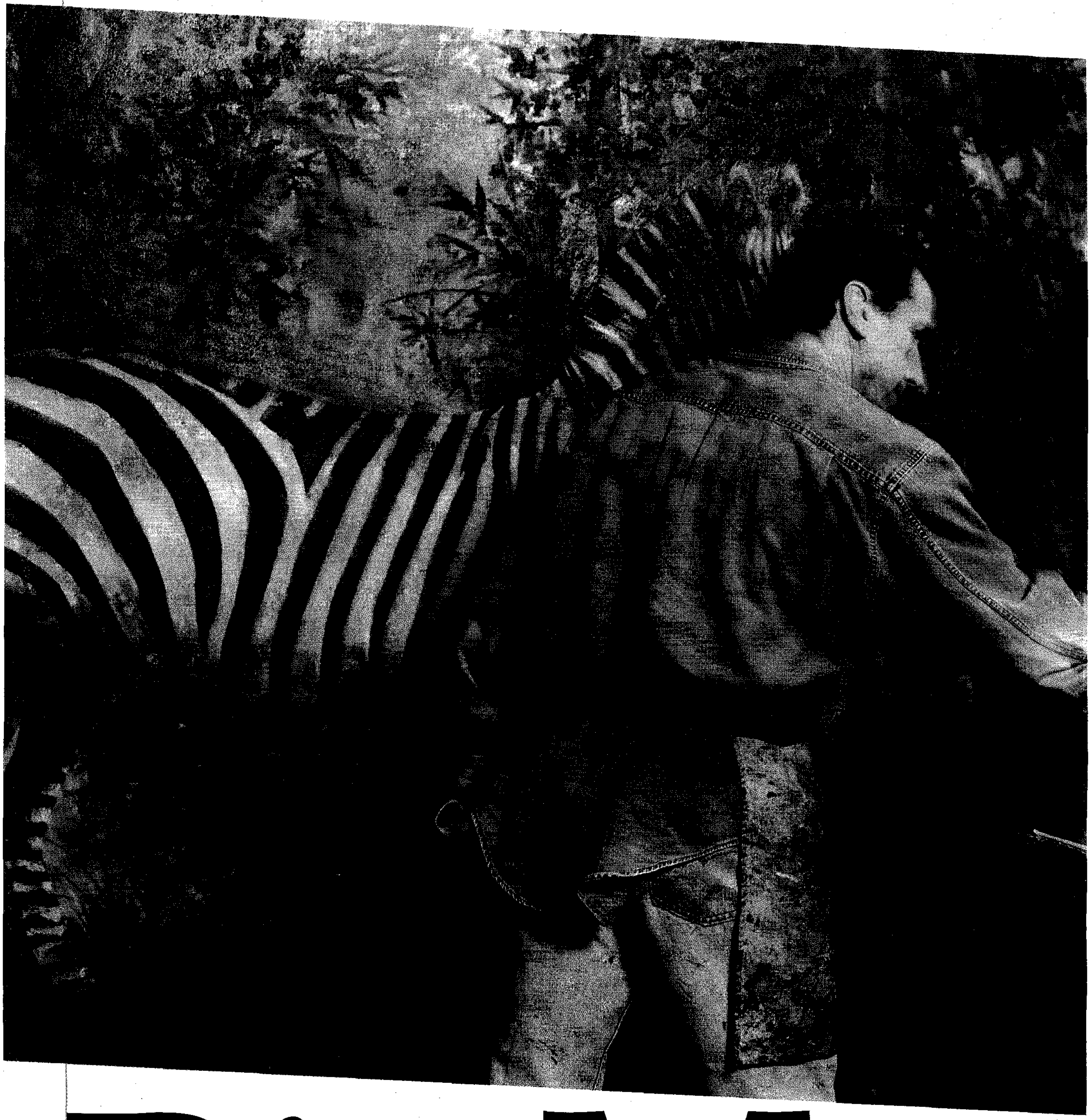
Sipping an Amstel Light with three or four undone shirt buttons revealing dark tufts of chest hair, Felske runs a hand through his white-blond, shoulder-length locks before jumping onto a conga line between Mark Bavaro and Daniela Pestova, his five-foot-eleven stature greatly diminished by their hulking figures. He leans in close and confides, in utter mock seriousness, "I'm the Mad Hatter."

OVER THE DIN AT DA SILVANO A FEW NIGHTS EARLIER, FELSKE takes gulps of San Pellegrino and looks over the crowd—David Duchovny, Helmut Lang, and, to his delight, Robert De Niro eating penne with his family at a corner table: the perfect setting for what he wants to discuss.

"See, the most important businessmen, bankers, film producers, and studio heads don't know squat when it comes to women," says Felske, winking indiscreetly in De Niro's direction. That's what *Word* is about: the Faustian bargain struck between a film writer struggling for credits and a 50-year-old studio head trolling for dates. It's a relationship not unlike Felske's with Ted Field, the fiftyish head of Interscope Records, who is rarely seen without a woman hovering around legal age ("Ted has no problem getting dates," Felske retorts, denying widespread buzz that the character is based on Field). Not to mention Felske's friendship with Mickey Rourke, with whom he lived for five months while rewriting Rourke's boxing movie, *Homeboy*. "I only got respect once he realized that I could get him pretty girls," says Felske.

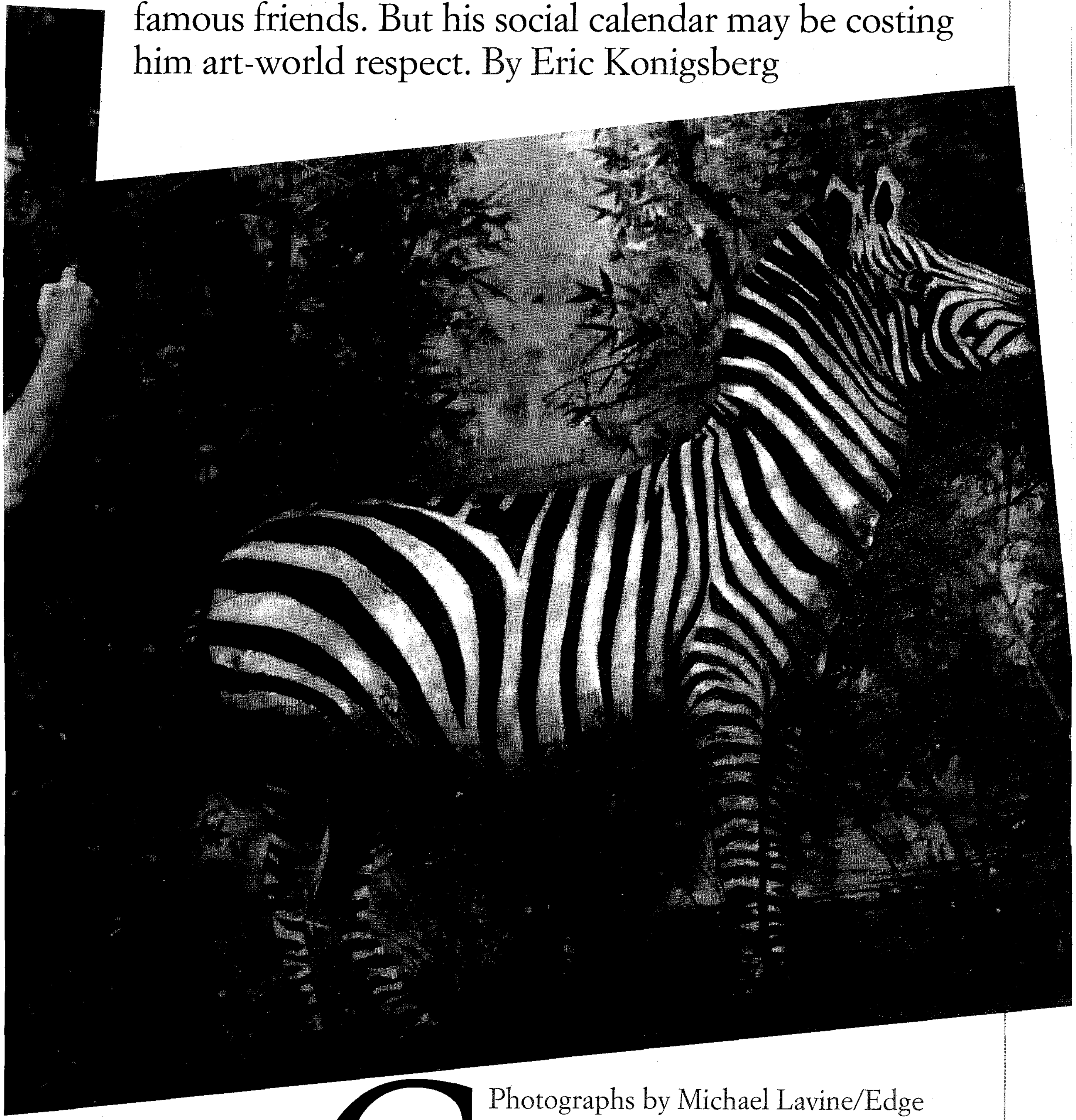
After dinner, Felske suggests a trip to Lot 61—"I hear it's the hot joint"—but I beg off. He asks if I have a boyfriend, and walks me home. Running his fingers through his mane concernedly, he has one last thing to say before stepping off into the night: "So, what's going on with my hair?" ▬

PHOTOGRAPH BY CHRIS BUCK



Big Man

Painter John Alexander commands high prices and famous friends. But his social calendar may be costing him art-world respect. By Eric Konigsberg



Photographs by Michael Lavine/Edge

on Canvas

Alexander's technique: At work on *Zebra* in his Amagansett studio in November.

THE FIRST TIME I VISITED JOHN ALEXANDER IN HIS Amagansett studio, there was a canvas drying on the far wall, a six-by-seven-foot painting of pink and white calla lilies that he would eventually entitle *Lotus With Red Water.* This painting, along with a handful of others that he and an assistant were photographing and packing off to New York, will be among the works on exhibit at the Marlborough Gallery, where Alexander's latest one-man show opens December 8. The exhibit consists almost entirely of landscapes, swamp scenes, and plants and flowers. A bunch of them have the straightforward quality of botanical prints and might be classified still lifes were it not for the bits of sky that are visible in the background. Looking at them, one sees the lush and classical influence of Courbet and Goya in his hand and is struck by the old-school quality of the subject matter. "I call them my old-lady pictures," Alexander said.

The artist Polly Kraft describes Alexander as "a painter's painter," and he declares himself "intoxicated by paint." Jane Livingston, an independent curator, says, with some implied quotation marks, "John wants to be the best damn painterly painter of his generation, and someday he may not be so far from being one of the best of his generation." But Alexander's devotion to such a painterly mode renders him an anachronistic figure in the art world. Even throughout the eighties, when he was best known for his gnarled and unsettling paintings of social satire, he was producing far more traditional pictures than the more ironic work being done by the leading painters of the era—artists such as David Salle, Ross Bleckner, and Julian Schnabel, who for one year was actually an undergraduate student in a drawing class Alexander taught at the University of Houston. Unlike so many other contemporary painters, Alexander does not paint in series, and he is not interested in using parts of the canvas for decoration.

Alexander is represented by the Marlborough Gallery on 57th Street, easily one of most prestigious dealers in town (it handles only sixteen artists in America, among them Alex Katz, Fernando Botero, and Larry Rivers), and his openings there typically draw upwards of 1,200 people. But none of his work is owned by the Museum of Modern Art, the Guggenheim, or the Whitney, which has never even included him in its Biennial (although, it should be pointed out, the Met bought one of his paintings in 1984, and his work is also in the Hirschhorn, the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, and the Corcoran Gallery). He has not had a show reviewed by the New York *Times* since 1987. "I think a lot of people see me as kind of a regional artist," says Alexander, who is from east Texas but has lived in New York for nearly twenty years. "Like, you know, 'Nice little painter.' "

ALTHOUGH HE CLAIMS TO BE AN OUTSIDER in what he calls "the New York art world as defined by *Artforum* and Chelsea and whatever," Alexander has very much an Establishment following. His friends, in large part a highly specific seventies-to-eighties-era magazine, comedy, rock, and East End–of–the–Hamptons circle, include Jimmy Buffett, *Men's Journal* editor Terry McDonell, Peter Maas, Paul McCartney, Jann Wenner, Billy Gibbons of ZZ Top, *60 Minutes's* Don Hewitt and Steve Kroft, Lorne Michaels, and a number of the original members of the *Saturday Night Live* group. Mick Jagger, Chevy Chase, Sylvester Stallone, Michael Keaton, Steve Martin, and Robin Williams all have bought his paintings. He got George Plimpton to interview him for the catalogue to his 1994 exhibit. He is one of the few contemporary painters whom *Time* critic Robert Hughes takes seriously (he at this point is also a good friend). He was the only artist besides Eric Fischl that Barbara Rose, the conservative art historian, included in the 1995 edition of her survey of American painting in the twentieth century. In some sense, his profile is like that of Goya, who was a court painter not afraid to tweak the bourgeoisie.

Alexander, who is 53, is of medium build, with a long chin and thinning brown hair, some of which is usually making its way in front of his eyes. He has the weathered, cowboyish aspect of a middle-aged man who has grown into his looks, the sort of man who is in fact better-looking now than he was at 25. He speaks in a Gulf-states drawl that adds an extra syllable to every word, and he tends to call everybody "lad" or "love." Hughes recently referred to him in print as "a Texan swamp hog raised by madness."

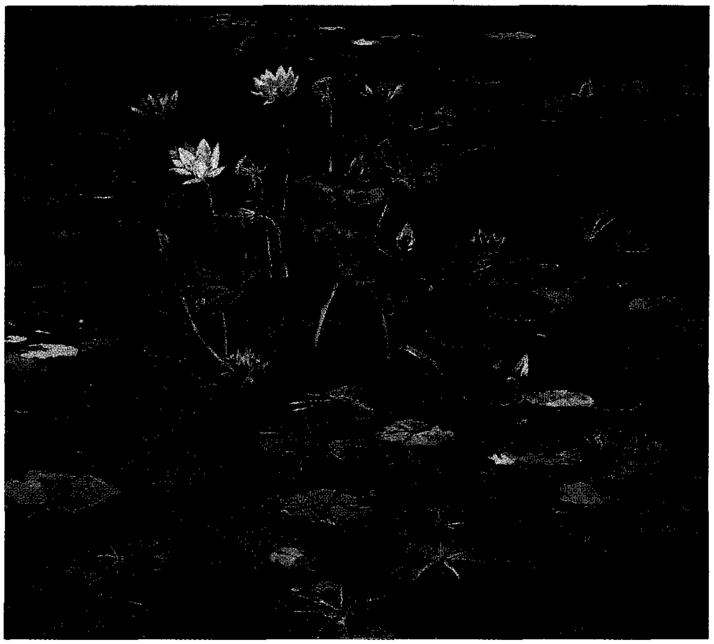
Alexander manages to appear as though he really doesn't care whom he offends. It's common to hear him half-jokingly refer to some of the people who represent him at Marlborough as "assholes." He once trapped a family of raccoons and released them underneath the kitchen of a yacht club ("a racist place where a lot of my friends belong"). "Johnny's one of the funniest people I

"I think a lot of people in the art world are put off by his aggressive heterosexuality," says Robert Hughes.

know," says Lorne Michaels. Why? "Everybody thinks it; Johnny says it." A few years ago, when Alexander was invited to lecture to a young-collectors circle at Christie's, Alexander told them to stay away from auction houses, which he said were "destroying the soul of contemporary art and reducing everything to money" (he has not been invited back). Moreover, in the eighties, he painted a series of unflattering portraits of real-life rich people (who might otherwise have been collecting his work): the Trumps in their gilded Belle Epoque lair; Henry Kissinger with various arts matrons and patrons, including Anne Bass, all of them looking uncomfortable at an opening in the African wing of the Met (the painting is titled *Cultural Convergence*).

The Trump painting, *American Gothic,* is particularly grotesque. "Their skin is almost green," Alexander said, showing me a photograph in his studio. "And look at this little sphincter mouth he's got on him." I asked who owns the painting now. "Some mini-Trump down in South Carolina," he said.

Even his detractors among art critics and curators say that Alexander is technically a good painter, though none of them would go on record as his detractors. (The Whitney's Lisa Philips would not comment on Alexander's absence from the museum, her assistant saying that "it would be awkward, because she and John are friends.") Alexander says that around 1994, he decided to turn his attention to depictions of nature and landscape because he wanted to draw more attention to his technical skill—"to show what I could really do," Alexander says. "If I had a peach and some grapes and a fish lying on a platter, and not some famous person and a sinister theme, then the content would simply be the painting itself.



Marlborough man: Alexander's heavily botanical new gallery show includes *Lotus With Red Water.*

"In the eighties, I consciously thought of myself as an observer of the human condition. Well, Goya and Manet, they painted still lifes in addition to their narrative social paintings. And when I go back to social commentary, I'll be a hell of a lot better painter than when I stopped doing it."

For one of his next shows, Alexander says, "I want to do a series of portraits of all the women I've slept with."

THE AMAGANSETT STUDIO IS JUST OFF MAIN STREET, A cedar barn Alexander rents from Lorne Michaels. There are two windows and a few signs in the driveway that say GO AWAY and KEEP OUT. Alexander and his girlfriend, Fiona Waterstreet, and her 8-year-old son, Harrison, divide their time between his home about a mile away and a loft in SoHo. He painted most of the 25 or so pictures in the new show over the summer and fall. He used to be able to complete a large painting in three days, but now it takes weeks. When September came and he was really under the gun, Alexander stayed alone on Long Island and was joined by Fiona and Harrison on weekends. He typically sleeps in, putters around his garden, and can't get to work until late in the afternoon. "I've tried very hard to break that pattern over the years, but I can't," he said. "The spirits come out at night."

All day long in the summer, Alexander's studio is a beehive. "The glamorous friends think they can drop in constantly," he said. "By the time fall comes around, this is a lonely place." For thrills and to keep himself attached to the community, Alexander serves as a volunteer fireman in Amagansett. "My working-class friends are something very important to me," he said.

Alexander and Waterstreet have been together four years. Before that, she was living in Aspen, where she designed a successful line of hats. He's been married twice before, first to his high-school girlfriend, a fellow painter, and then to Rosie Shuster, a comedy writer he met through his friends at *Saturday Night Live* (she had been married to Lorne Michaels). When Waterstreet moved in, she set about decorating both homes, which are full of Mission furniture and plaid sofas and silver picture frames. "Before Fiona got there, the loft looked like your typical white-trash front yard," says his friend the screenwriter Joe Forristal. "He had a front end from a Volkswagen in the living room." Alexander said Waterstreet made him get rid of a "big piss basin" he'd kept next to his bed in Amagansett because he didn't like to go downstairs to use the bathroom in the middle of the night.

ALEXANDER SPENDS A LOT OF TIME THESE DAYS TRYING TO FIGURE out what if anything there was in his background that made a painter of him. He grew up the only child of older parents in Beaumont, Texas, where his father, who was born in 1878, retired from an engineering job in the oil business. "There wasn't a single art book in our house or any art on the wall," he says. Roger Winter, a painter who taught Alexander in the M.F.A. program at SMU, thinks it was having a father with a link to the nineteenth century that's made Alexander such an old-fashioned artist. "In the seventies, the intellectual crowd at SMU championed conceptual art and earthworks," Winter says. "John always painted, and he caught hell. His thesis project was 200 paintings. Another student had a Volkswagen and a tape recorder strung up on a wall making noises."

Alexander was forced to repeat eleventh grade and says he got

Photograph courtesy of Marlborough Gallery

When Alexander is asked what de Kooning said about his work, there is a long beat. " 'Nice,' 'Nice paintings.' "

expelled from three high schools "for vandalism, tearing shit up, getting into fights all the time." He drew constantly in class, in the margins of his books and on desks: "I realized early on that I could draw better than any of the other kids in my school, and I could make them laugh and draw attention to myself."

Sometimes in the summer Alexander's father would take him hunting or fishing in the piney woods, and he thinks his sensibility comes from that: "We had this perception that there was danger in the woods, everything from alligators to three or four poisonous snakes to voodoo witch doctors." Through the eighties and early nineties, when he embarked on the enormous, socially engaged paintings for which he got known, Alexander often used religious imagery and put beaklike masks on his figures. "The masks make people look even stupider than they are," he says. "They're also like a Klan hood or a dunce hat."

Alexander moved to New York in 1979, when he was 34: "I left my wife and my job. I put all my stuff in my truck and drove out. I'd already had two museum shows. I'd already had an affair with the mayor of Houston [Kathy Whitmire]. When I came, I didn't have to work besides painting. But still it was a risk." He had friends in New York, among them Bill Murray, whom he'd met in Texas through an artist friend. (Alexander and Murray are now part owners of the Saint Paul Saints, a minor-league baseball team.)

Portrait of the artist of the deal: Alexander in front of *American Gothic,* his painting of Donald and Ivana Trump, in 1989.

"I'm not the sort of person who believes I've gotten where I am completely on my own," Alexander said. "All my life I've felt the need to seek out information, by asking questions, by meeting people." The first time Alexander came to the Hamptons was 1976. "It was one of the high points of my life," he said. He and the painter Dan Rizzie drove out from Houston, not even stopping in New York City, "drinking tequila, smoking joints, doing line after line of coke," straight to Willem de Kooning's studio in the Springs, where they spent the day with him. De Kooning is one of Alexander's heroes, among the most painterly painters of the modern era, and the invitation had been arranged by Emilie Kilgore, a woman in Houston who was de Kooning's girlfriend. "I was sleeping with her, too, at the time," Alexander said. "Another time, de Kooning visited her in Houston and he came to my studio."

When I asked Alexander what de Kooning said about his work, there was a long blank beat, and then he said, " 'Nice,' 'Nice paintings.' Basically he said technical stuff, something to the effect of 'It's hard to paint skies.' I drove him around in my car all over Houston for three days. I remember me and him would be driving down a freeway and I'd look over at this delicate little man with this white hair, and him just going on about billboards, saying, 'You know, I was a sign painter in Holland.' "

Interestingly, along with Hughes, who he says made him a "better observer of nature," and Jim Harithas, a museum director in Houston who'd taken him to meet the painters Wifredo Lam and Balthus, the people Alexander says were of greatest influence on his painting were two women. There was the curator Jane Livingston, who gave Alexander a one-man retrospective at the Corcoran Gallery in 1980. "We'd go to museums around the world and have access to drawing racks and entire collections," he says of Livingston, whom he also dated briefly. "She brought an intellectual excitement to my life." The other was Barbara Rose. In 1983, Rose caused a splash by publishing an open letter to "J.A." in *Vanity Fair,* using him as a template for everything in the art scene that was promising and not yet corrupted by the marketplace, advice on "how a strong individual talent can still survive."

"He's developed this fan club among slightly older women in the art world, some of whom are influential," says one friend. "It may simply be because his fellow male painters are so competitive and he's not very close to many of them, but there is a pattern."

"Women are very drawn to John," says the painter Polly Kraft, whom Alexander considers a good friend. "He's affectionate and very seductive. John's not one of those artists who doesn't talk to women over 35."

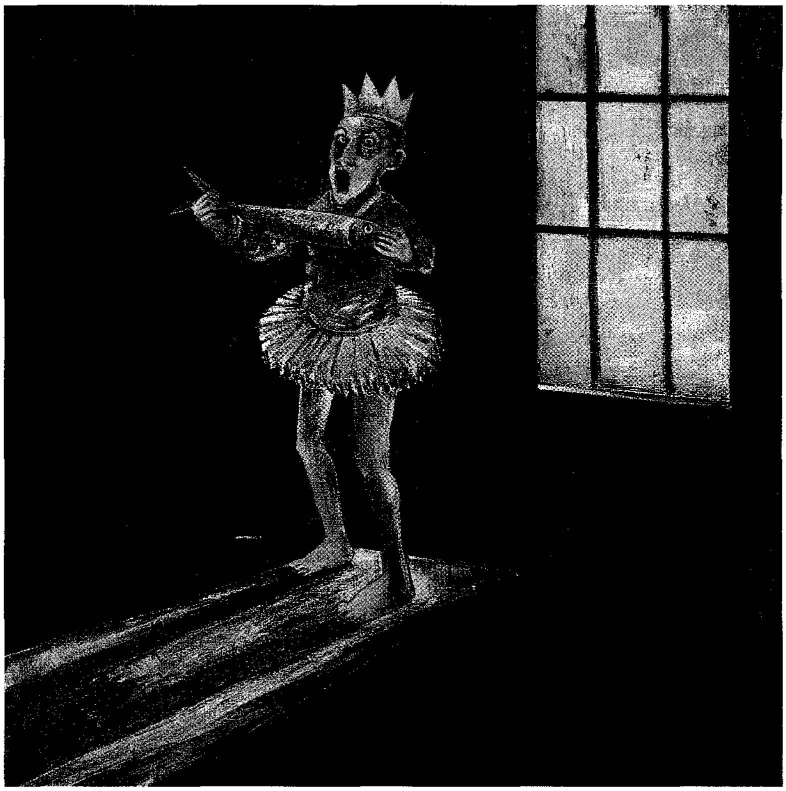
When I asked Alexander what he thought about this, he seemed insulted. "Shit, lad, I'm fond of all ages of women," he said.

Unlike so many painters, Alexander doesn't bridle at interpreting his work. "With my paintings, there's always something behind the façade," he told me. "Hollyhocks have religious symbolism, and here they are reaching up to the heavens, They are allegorical. Still, mostly I'd say these paintings tell you about my life right now rather than our times. Because the past few years I've spent a lot of time as a gardener. Because I'm interested in nature." He was eager to enumerate some of the modern elements to this work: "The hollyhocks seem to be floating in air? Have you ever seen that before? Have you seen such a big picture of hollyhocks? Who else puts a giant field of golden white lilies in a river of blood? So you see, it is innovative and new." The only animal painting in the exhibit, a ten-by-seven-foot picture of a zebra that had been inspired by a George Stubbs painting, reflects Alexander's arrival as a conservationist (he gave up hunting).

Perhaps Alexander's critical reputation suffers from his not being identified with any particular movement. "[Jasper] Johns and [Robert] Rauschenberg had that advantage, of being part of a cohesive aesthetic," Livingston says. "They supported each other and they were marketed together. Even artists like Schnabel and Salle and Fischl, who are not compatriots, still have the strength in numbers that comes from competing with each other and from having something of a shared vocabulary. John really is on his own."

Some of Alexander's friends think one reason he hasn't got a place in the art pantheon is because of his friendships with show-business people. "The art world doesn't take him seriously because they think he's too much of a social character," his friend the art dealer turned writer Michael Thomas says. Hughes says, "I think a lot of people in the art world are sort of put off by his aggressive heterosexuality. I've heard people in that world complain about what they take to be John's vulgarity and his swamp-hogginess and say that he's not an intellectual painter. The fact is, he's not. But neither are his contemporaries. What John is, is an aesthete who plays up to the provincial thing."

Alexander and I rode to the Marlborough Gallery one afternoon so he could drop off some Mylar prints he'd just finished. He was wearing sneakers, jeans, a tweed jacket, and a baseball cap that said ESPN—he looked like a history teacher who coached JV football on the side. "Hold your applause, hold your applause," he said loudly as he walked by the reception desk. Kim Schmidt, a young gallery employee, gave him a kiss. "I like the *fleurs,* John," she said. He talked with another employee about pricing the prints, and they decided on $1,500 apiece. His large paintings will go for somewhere in the $40,000-to-$50,000 range, which is decent but not what he used to get in the eighties, when the art market was at its most optimistically robust and he managed to sell the occasional $100,000 painting. (Livingston thinks Alexander should be getting $150,000 a painting.) "Schnabel and Salle and the other artists of the eighties—forget their painting, but they made a great contribution," Alexander said later. "Because with them, everybody was clamoring to find new artists, and the market opened up. I couldn't do a fucking pencil sketch on a napkin without someone trying to buy it before I was out of the restaurant. I was like a rap star with a hit record. I had limos for my staff when we'd go out at night."



A painterly (and unsettling) painter: Alexander's *Mama Wanted a Dancer But All He Wanted to Do Is Fish* (1989).

ONE DAY LATE IN THE FALL, I ARRIVED IN AMAGANSETT TO find Alexander in the middle of a painting of dying sunflowers. He seemed self-conscious at first—not just because I was finally seeing him paint, something he'd been promising to allow for months, but because of what he was painting. "Sunflowers to me represent dying, the end of summer, and my birthday coming in October," he said. "Also, Van Gogh and my own absurdity in painting a sunflower painting. I look at that and I think, *Oh, Jesus, I'm really setting myself up now to look stupid."*

He moved abruptly all day among several projects, from the sunflowers to a Mylar print of lilies to a small watercolor of an imaginary species of fish to the zebra painting. The only real break came around 8 P.M., after he phoned one of his friends from the Fire Department. Alexander asked him to place our orders at a steakhouse in town, so that the food would be on the table by the time we got there. He was pretty far along with the flowers themselves, which he'd painted from nature—but had done nothing with the background. "One of these days, I'm going to get in the habit of putting a ground down first, before I begin the flowers," he said. "There are two things I can do. One is I can leave the background light and let the flowers and the stalks pop out as dark. Or, two, I can make the background dark and make the flowers lighter." He walked to the corner of the room to watch the weather report on TV. Then he took another brush from a can, dragged it through a clump of dark slate-blue paint, and got a heavy, almost violent rhythm going around the edges of the flowers. Each swipe at the canvas covered only a tiny area. Alexander said it was maybe a turbulent late-afternoon sky he was painting, which was why its color and mood varied from one inch to the next.

He went to a shelf at the other end of the barn. "Look now," he said. "You're going to think I've never had an original thought before, but I—here." He pulled down a book of paintings from the National Gallery in London and turned to Bellini's *Portrait of the Doge Leonardo Loredan* to show the blue in the background. He blew into a pair of PVC gloves to inflate them and began mixing the slate blue with turquoise and white, turning it a more mannerist shade.

When it got late, Alexander drank tequila and smoked a cigar, and a clarity of vision seemed to kick in. He talked about how he hoped to hit his stride in his sixties and seventies, just as his father had. He talked about how his "obsessiveness" toward his painting has been hard on the women around him. He laughed out loud at a line in a blues album he had on the stereo, where Junior Wells accidentally sings, "It's too *inconvenience* to be alone." Alexander said he thought it was interesting that there was no painting equivalent of the blues: "Why doesn't everyone paint paintings dealing with failed loves?" He decided that failed loves would be the subject of his next show. He remembered he was already planning to devote a show to pictures of all the women of his life.

Alexander drove me to his studio before breakfast the next morning, because he was impatient to see the sunflowers, and with fresh eyes the blue background gave each of the 25 or so flowers a distinct character and each seemed to be at a different stage of its life. One of them in particular was at once in several stages, because it had just begun to turn.

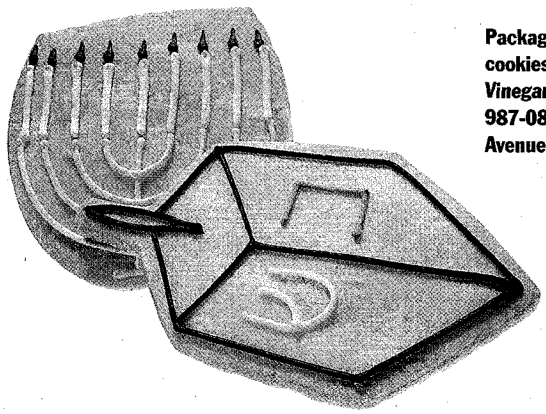
"Right now, I have to say that I feel kind of puffed up," he said. "I know that this is damn well working right now. Already it's like that feeling of waking up after fucking a woman half the night and looking at her and you say, 'Yeah, I might even love this person.' And then you know you haven't sold yourself short. Painting is all to do with the internal me." ▬

Photographs courtesy of John Alexander

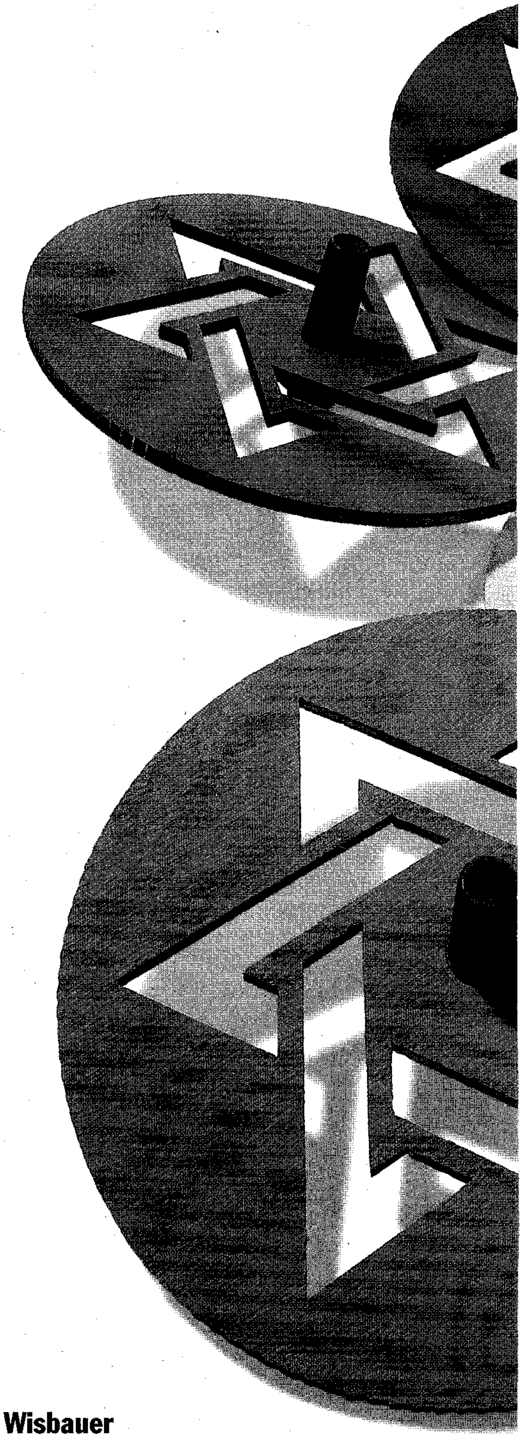
BEST BETS

BY CORKY POLLAN

The essentials—and some nonessentials—for celebrating Hanukkah, the festival of light.



Package of six dreidel and menorah butter cookies with chocolate gelt is $12 at the Vinegar Factory (431 East 91st Street; 987-0885) and Eli's Manhattan (1411 Third Avenue, at 80th Street; 717-8100).

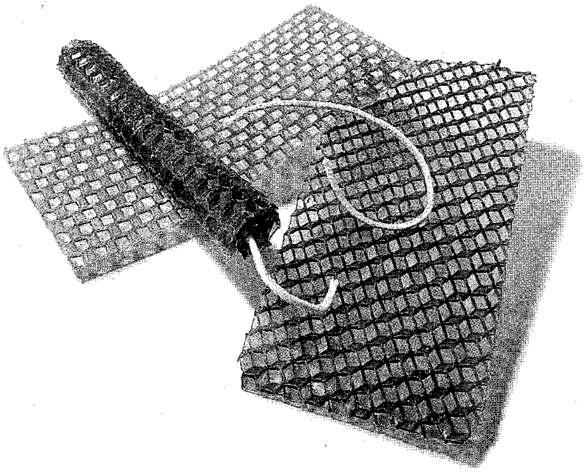


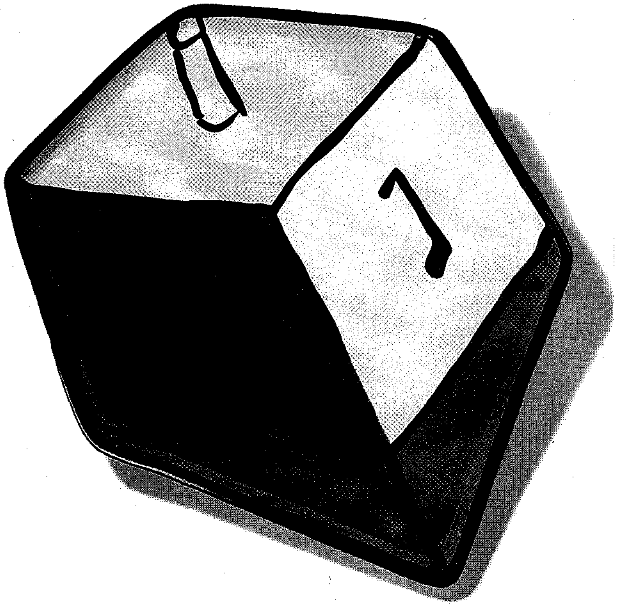
Toycrafter Star of David laser-cut wood tops are $4 each at the Jewish Museum's Cooper Shop (1109 Fifth Avenue, at 92nd Street; 423-3211).

12 feet of coloring fun! for Hanukkah
Chanukah coloring Kit Jr.
60166
HANUKKAH
Drawn by Silver-Tt
green
Colored by

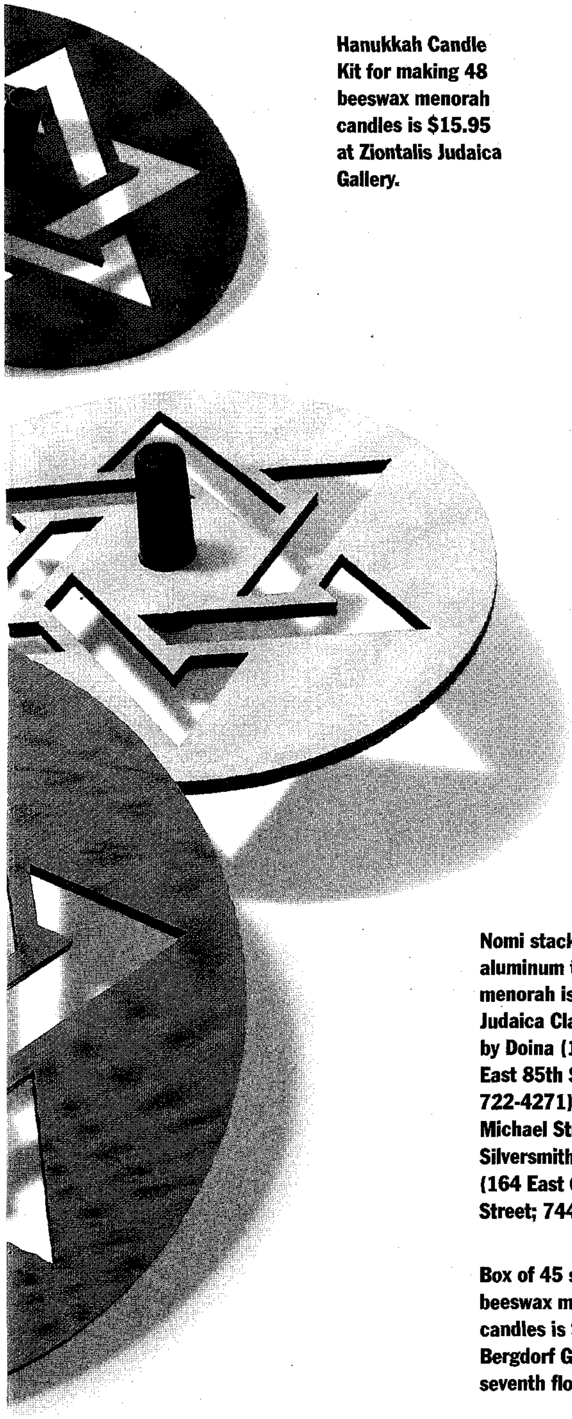
Chanukah Coloring Kit Jr. with a twelve-foot pull-out story roll, four crayons, and a crayon sharpener is $3.50 at Feller's Judaica & Gift Gallery (1205 Lexington Avenue, near 81st Street; 472-2300) and Ziontalis Judaica Gallery (29 West 35th Street; second floor; 643-8863).

Photographed by Steve Wisbauer

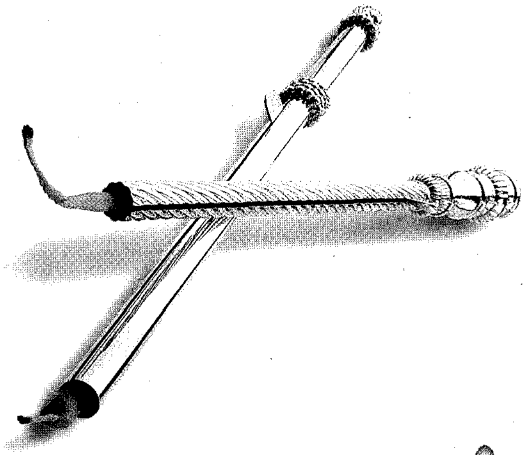




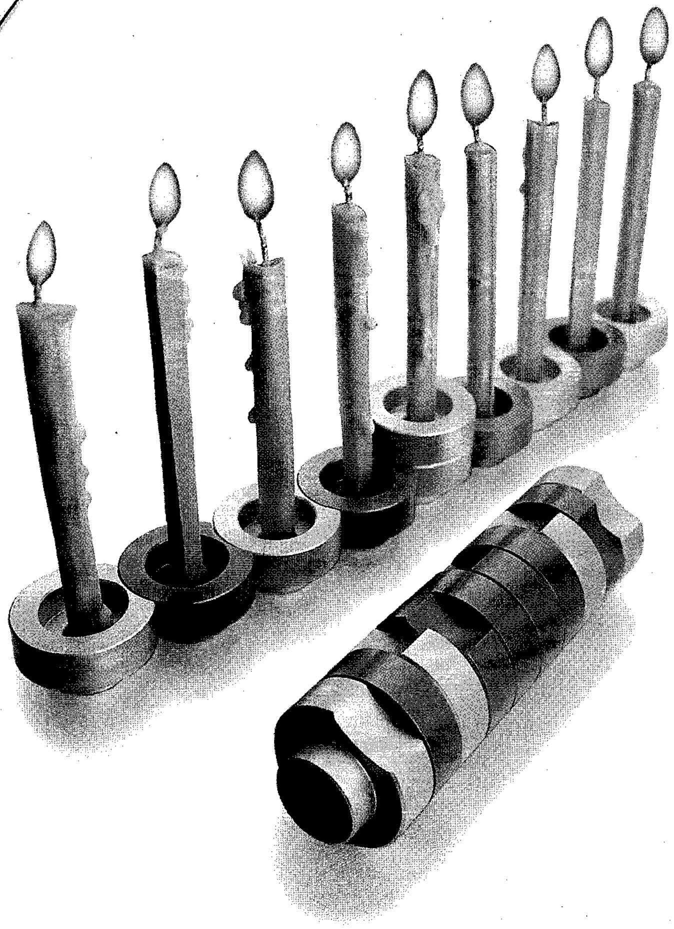
David Heger dreidel-shaped ceramic latke platter is $65 at the Jewish Museum's Cooper Shop and in Fantasia on Lord & Taylor's third floor.



Hanukkah Candle Kit for making 48 beeswax menorah candles is $15.95 at Ziontalis Judaica Gallery.



Handcrafted sterling-silver candlelighters with extendable wicks are $95 and $145 at In the Spirit Gallery (460 East 79th Street; 861-5222).

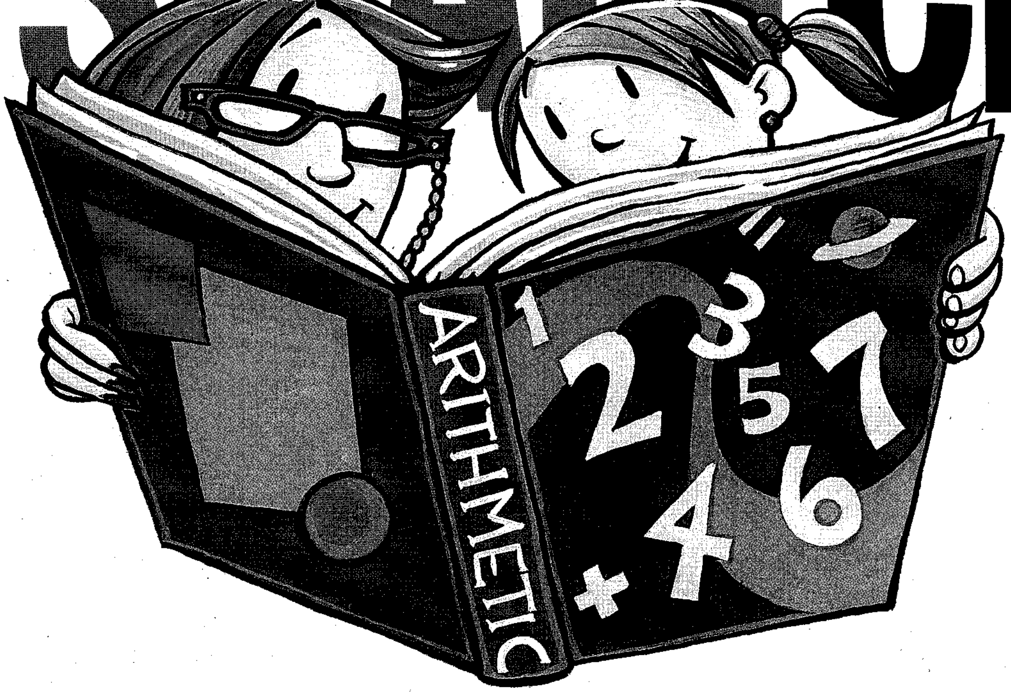


Nomi stackable aluminum traveling menorah is $75 at Judaica Classics by Doina (125 East 85th Street; 722-4271) and Michael Strauss Silversmiths Ltd. (164 East 68th Street; 744-8500).

Box of 45 silvery beeswax menorah candles is $30 on Bergdorf Goodman's seventh floor.

SAVE TIME, SAVE MONEY, STAY SANE IN NEW YORK

SMART CITY



Tutoring 101

Your son's struggling in math. Your daughter's drowning in homework. A tutorial on finding the right help. **BY SUSAN BRENNA**

As first-semester grades come in, the tutor hotline is buzzing. There are juniors facing SATs (and less-than-B's in advanced-placement courses), sixth-graders squashed by math homework, fourth-graders at war with paragraph construction. An army of educational professionals—from graduate students to moonlighting teachers to retired academic department heads—stands ready to help students, one-on-one, at rates from $10 to $400-something an hour.

Can your child's problem be eased in a few extra sessions at school with her math teacher or the reading specialist, or do you need to outsource? Take heart, say veterans on both the parent and tutor sides of this match. Once you've tapped into the network, you're no more than a phone call away from your next specialist.

Predictably, Manhattan is gripped by tutor madness. "I have parents of seventh- and eighth-graders calling me, wanting to be tutored for the SATs already," says child psychologist Gail Furman. Consider whether hiring a tutor for anything less than imminent failure or a month lost to mono will make your child feel deficient. And don't jump too fast if he seems suddenly frustrated. In November, a fifth-grade boy told Furman he wasn't a good enough reader. "He was clutching in his hand *Death Be Not Proud,"* assigned by a teacher at his elite school. "Not only is it a book that, emotionally, no fifth-grader should be reading, but it's written at a high-school reading level."

But let's assume you've been through the preliminaries and you've decided your kid needs a private tutor. How do you make the perfect match?

UNDERSTAND YOU'RE HIRING A SPECIALIST . . . You wouldn't let the pediatrician stitch your kid's forehead, right? There are learning-disability specialists who work mostly with younger children and are often referred by professional societies; reading-and-writing specialists who are often moonlighting full-time teachers; and SAT tutors who may specialize in math and/or verbal skills. Then there are content tutors—chemistry, French—who can tutor for the SAT II subject tests or help polish high schoolers' course work. In your telephone interview, ask about job experience and how the tutor was trained; a retired high-school math teacher may know content but not how to psych out the Educational Testing Service. Even if she's called the "reading teacher" at a public school, a tutor may have only an elemen-

(continued on page 52)

E X P E R T   T E S T I M O N Y

Off the Beaten Track

We know. The Reservoir in Central Park is a lovely place to run. *We know.* But let's say you've run that route long enough to be on a first-name basis with some of the sunken detritus, or perhaps the Reservoir is a bit out of your way, as in, in another area code. Offering a more ecumenical view of New York's primo jogging spots is Allan Steinfeld, president of the New York Road Runners Club (the New York City Marathon people), who tipped us off to some worthy contenders: under the Verrazano-Narrows Bridge in Brooklyn (by Dyker Beach Park; there's a trail); through Clove Lakes Park in Staten Island; and, in Manhattan, a path through Riverside Park north to the Cloisters, or a route starting at Chelsea Piers, south to Battery Park, then around the bottom end of the island and up to the South Street Seaport. **SAM GROBART**

Illustration by Robert Piersanti.

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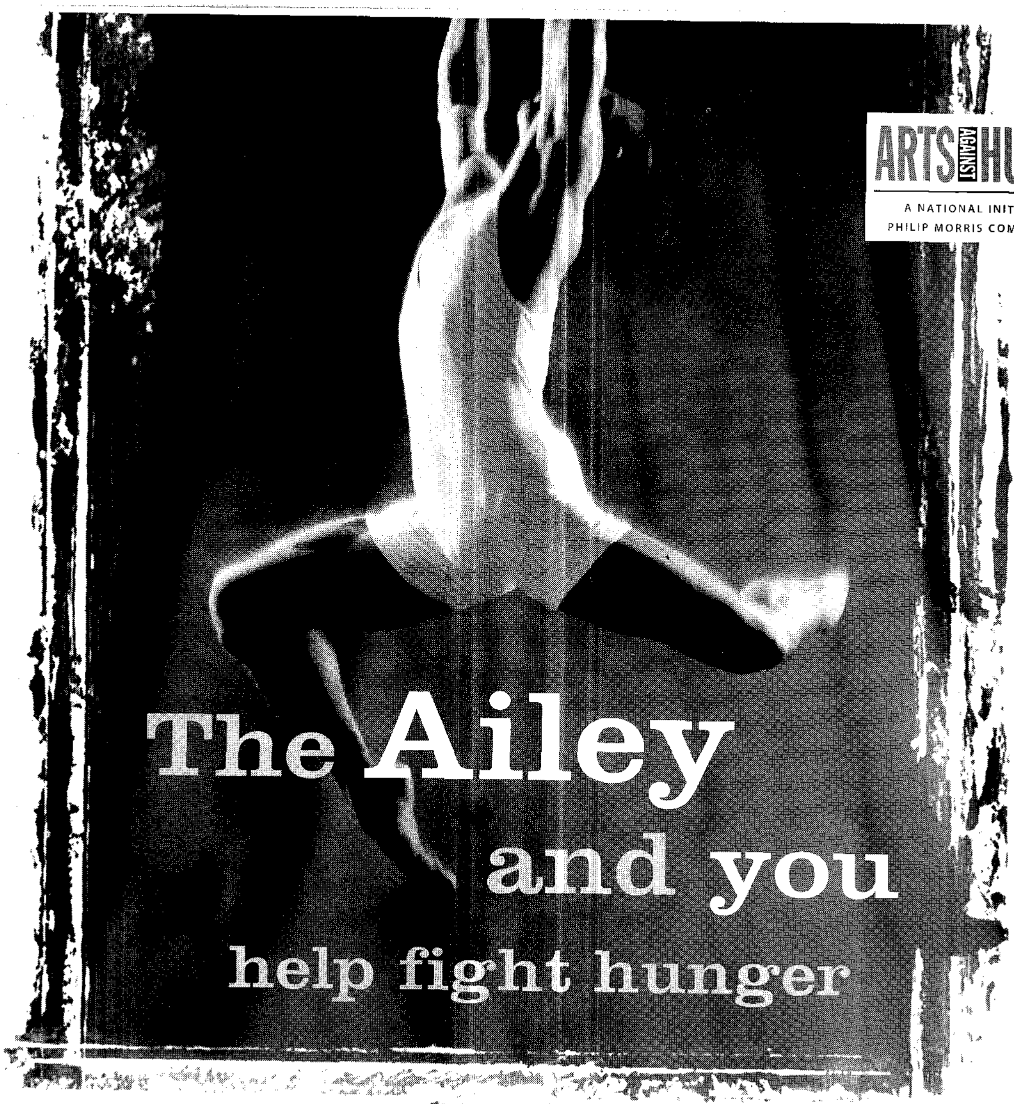

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(continued from page 50)

tary-education degree and little special training. And ask what teaching methods tutors use to catch kids up—pencil-and-paper review work, interactive computer exercises, a particular remedial curriculum? What you don't want to hear is vagueness, which suggests no method.

AND I FIND THIS SPECIALIST WHERE? Your best referral source will be other parents who have kids with difficulties similar to your kids'. If you've got a good relationship with your school heads, start with their recommendations. Some schools are not tutor-friendly, partly because they think parents turn too quickly to tutors, partly out of mercenary resentment: A busy, in-demand tutor can earn more than a teacher, without all the prep work and papers to mark. Other circles where names get passed: psychologists and pediatricians.

Educational consultants—also known as admissions counselors—all know tutors who get great results, and some share names freely. But because many top tutors are booked solid, some consultants won't open their Rolodexes to any but client families. In such situations it wouldn't be unsporting to ask friends to work *their* networks.

You can hire a tutor privately through an agency: Local favorites are Advantage Testing (744-8800), Stanford Coaching (245-3888), and Princeton Review (362-6900). But some tutors trained through these agencies eventually strike out on their own, and they're always willing to refer peers who handle different specialties. If you hire through an agency, know they may have a price/experience hierarchy. Interview more than one candidate, and don't assume the priciest will necessarily work most smoothly with your child. Meet by phone if you must, but many tutors like to check out their chemistry with prospective students. While you're chatting, ask how the tutor will assess a child's progress. And make sure you can sit in now and then.

BEWARE BIG PROMISERS . . . If you're hiring someone for the SATs, ask how much her average student's score goes up. "That's legitimate," says Lisa Heilbrunn Rattray, an actress-tutor of six years' experience. "But any tutor who claims, 'Just by seeing me your kid's score will go up'—I wouldn't trust that. So much depends on how much work your kid is willing to put in." Rattray blows the whistle to parents on slackers, partly because she can't afford to have clients heading toward Layabout U.: "Your career is totally dependent on your reputation, and these parents want to get their kids into the best schools."

TOP TUTORS (MOSTLY) DON'T DO CONSPIRACIES . . . Maybe the partnership between you and your school has grown a little tense. Maybe your kid's academic difficulties are prompting unsocial behavior. Don't try to hire a tutor secretly just to avoid conceding some crucial negotiating point. Teachers not only know your kid has a tutor—they know *everyone* has one, or else a parent deeply familiar with the homework. An ethical tutor will lay it on the line that she has to be able to talk to your child's teachers, to understand the curriculum, and to chart progress. If you're one of those people whose kid genuinely is getting shafted by his or her school, you have other calls to make first.

> **"Anything over $100 [an hour] is, to me, out of control," says Cynthia Bing of the Parents League.**

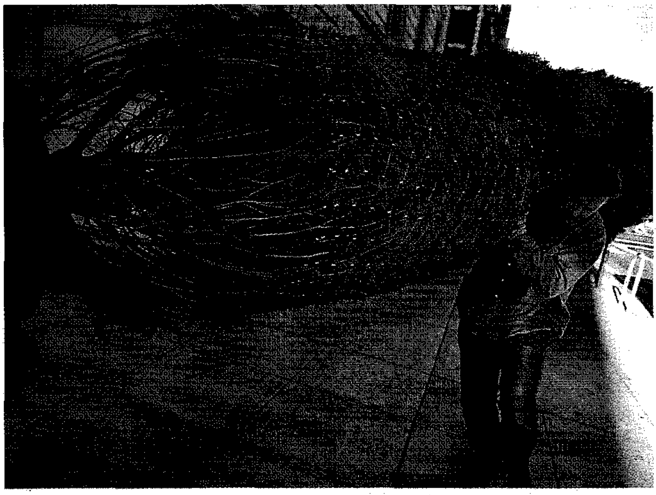
YOU'RE PAYING TOO MUCH . . . if you're not within range of the median Manhattan price, which now stands at about $70 for a one-hour private session (though $100 or more is not unusual for learning-disability specialists). "Anything over $100 is, to me, out of control," says Cynthia Bing, a seasoned adviser with the Parents League, which keeps tutor résumés on file. That may not hold for long. Price creep is fueled by a cadre of test-prep legends who command several hundred dollars a session. Discounts can sometimes be negotiated: For more-than-once-a-week sessions, for tutoring at off-hours (like on-site at your child's school during his free period), for making your child—not the tutor—travel. If you and two friends have kids with similar needs, a tutor can work sequentially with the children in one location, shav-

(continued on page 54)

THE NAVIGATOR

Christmas, Delivered

I want a Christmas tree for my apartment, but hauling it up to my fourth-floor walk-up is such a hassle. Is there an easier way?



Oy, **Christmas tree: Get it delivered already.**

If you pile on the charm (and cash) and live nearby, you can usually sweet-talk the sidewalk tree seller into a delivery. But if you're pining for more than the corner Charlie Brown Christmas tree, several of the city's top nurseries will deliver a Rock Center–worthy pine to your home, no sweat. New York Flowers & Plant Shed will even install and decorate your tree for around $50 to $175 (including the cost of ornaments). If you're a sentimentalist who prefers to create your own Martha Stewart–esque showpiece, don't worry—there are plenty of dealers who'll set you up with a beauty, then leave the tinsel-hanging to you:

● **New York Flowers & Plant Shed**, 662-4400 or 800-753-9595. Six-foot Douglas firs, $29.95; Fraser firs, $80. Delivery fees: free in the 10025 Zip Code, $4 for the rest of Manhattan, $10 to outer boroughs.

● **Midtown Florist and Greenhouse**, 513-7000 or 718-636-0020. Six-foot balsams, $25; Fraser firs, $60 ($10 for each additional foot). Delivery: Depends on tree size and delivery location, but you're looking at roughly $10 in Brooklyn and $25 to Manhattan.

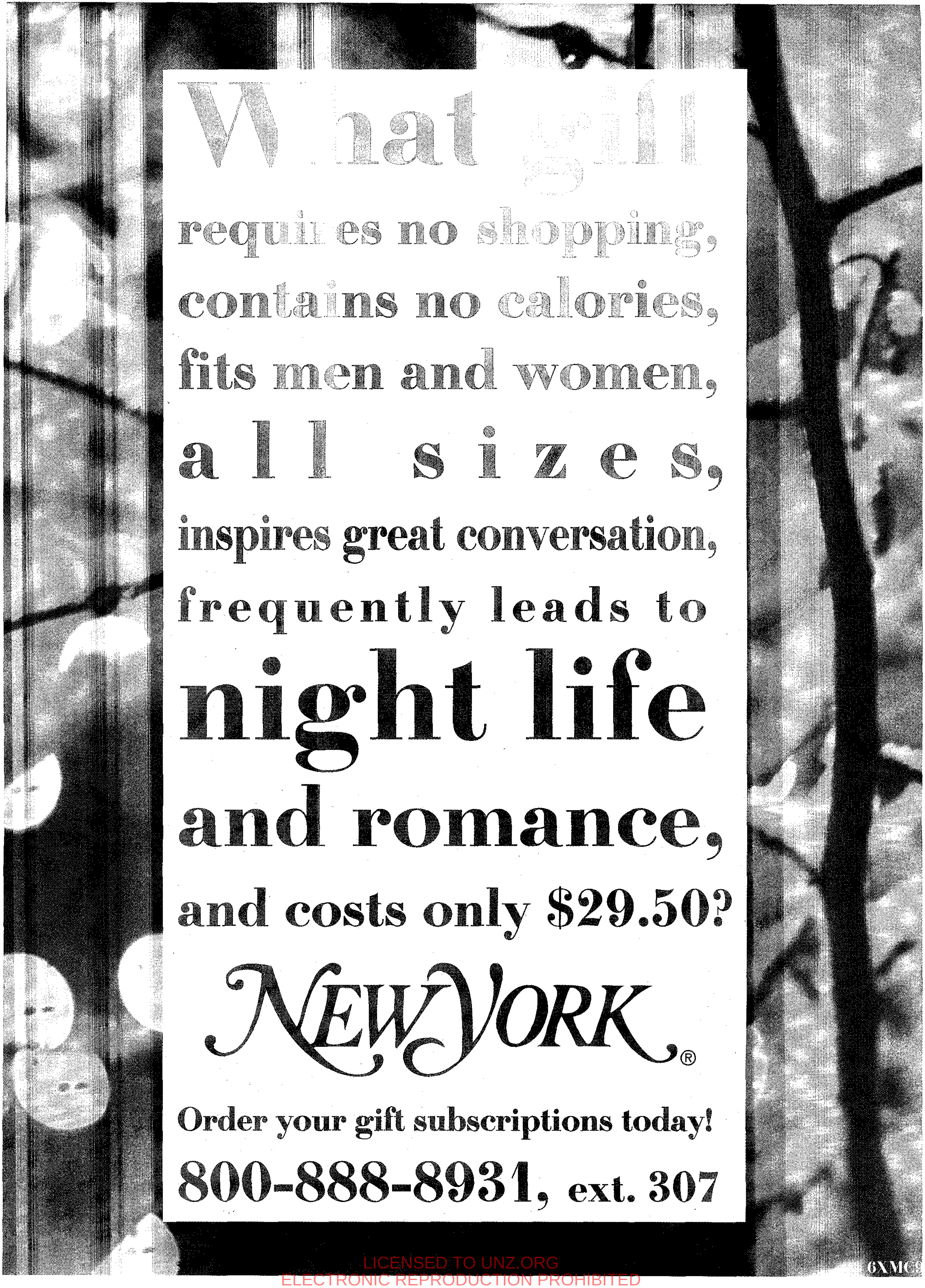
● **City Plants**, 268-0381. Six- to seven-foot Douglas firs, $60–$70. Delivery: $15 below 59th Street, $20 above, more for outer boroughs.

● **Chelsea Garden Center**, 929-2477. Noble firs, $100–$150; Douglas firs, $12 a foot. Delivery: $30, $75 for installation.

● **Other options**: **eChristmasTrees.com** has Scotch pines starting at $54.95; **Smith & Hawken** offers six-foot Fraser firs for $95 (catalogue only, delivery by UPS; call 800-776-3336); and **Oh, Christmas Tree** (292-7454) can UPS six- to seven-foot Maine balsam firs right up through the third week of December.

ANGIE MAXIMO

Photograph by Linda Rosier.



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6XMC9

(continued from page 52)

ing travel time and keeping you marginally more solvent. Some tutors offer semi-private sessions and rates.

And beware permanent, expensive dependence. "A tutor comes to your house, he's friends with your kids, he knows your dog—they can really invade your life," warns one educational consultant.

USE SERVICES AT HAND . . . Many schools (particularly private ones) teach organizational and study skills and assess children for possible learning problems, functions that were once performed almost entirely by outside professionals. Most private schools and many public middle and high schools make teachers available to students for after-school catch-up sessions. Take advantage of every service your school offers before you hire a tutor. If your child is doing well overall but somehow missed that day they taught spelling, take it up with your school head. "Don't give up too easily—the school may respond if you go make a ladylike stink," said one admissions counselor who asked to remain nameless.

A HOMEWORK HELPER IS NOT A TUTOR . . . Through local college-placement offices and some high-school guidance departments, parents find and hire older students to help their distracted elementary- or middle-schoolers focus and pace themselves through homework. They're generally paid between $10 and $50 an hour, and if you're not watching closely, they really *may* write your kid's paper—easier than making the recalcitrant kid do it. School heads are skeptical of these helpers, whom some regard as paid stand-ins (more literate than the nanny) for working parents who don't want to start in on the history of the civil-rights movement when they roll home at 8 P.M. But some tutors—among them Nancy Carlinsky, who helps kids with learning disabilities—believe there's a role for them, particularly if they echo the tutors' strategies. Carlinsky teaches fundamental literacy skills, "with the full understanding that I'm not going to keep the child afloat with homework, or we'll never get done."

PATIENCE IS NO VIRTUE . . . This is not psychotherapy. You should see changes within three or four weeks. "Certainly as far as a child's motivation, and caring about the work, and being a little more organized—that shows up in the first month," says education consultant Jane E. Kolber. Although an academic boost may not become apparent so quickly, "you can certainly know whether your child likes that tutor," which is critically important.

YOU DON'T WANT TO HEAR THIS, BUT . . . Maybe your kid is in the wrong school. If he's seeing three subject tutors *and* working with the homework helper, and he's still frustrated and overwhelmed, "you need someone who's an adult to call a halt," says Carlinsky. But she disagrees with hard-liners who say that if tutoring is a permanent feature of a child's life, then the school is too high a reach. While some children *are* crushed by volume remediation, "that is a very different thing," Carlinsky says, "from hearing a [tutored] child saying, 'I'm working very hard, and I can't play with my friends in the afternoon, but you know what? I'm keeping my head above water.' " ■

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SALES & BARGAINS **SHYAMA PATEL**

Package Deals

Your presents may look **too pretty to unwrap**—*but these bulk prices on ribbons and papers will keep you smiling as your loved ones* **do it anyway.**

FESTIVE GIFT WRAP CAN EASILY COST as much as the present it contains. But not if you forgo upmarket paper shops and buy the same goods from wholesalers in bulk. As most retail stores order supplies well before the holidays, some wholesalers will open to the public during December to clear their inventories. Here, a few places to send you packing.

Take your bows at B&J.

On the high end, trimmings wholesaler **A Touch of Ivy** (which also sells sachets and tree skirts) recommends wrapping gifts in jewel-toned fabric remnants and tying the bundle with ribbons. (It works especially well with irregular shapes like bottles and pillows.) Remnants range from $1 for a small piece to $9 for a yard. Ten-yard spools of ribbon run from $12 for sheer gold organza to $45 for wide brocades. For a spicy touch, sneak a pinch of clove potpourri under the gift wrap.

For basic supplies, the first stop is **RTR Packaging**. Boxes are the specialty here, with simple styles as well as corrugated and printed versions that don't need wrapping. Prices are from $1 for a leopard-printed jewelry-size box to $1.50 for a shirt box to $5 for a butterfly-print eight-inch cube. Good wrapping paper in traditional stripes, solids, and seasonal prints is a steal at $12 to $14 for 25 feet, and cheerful gift bags are $1 to $4.

For a crafty, eco-friendly look, head for art-supply shops. At **Pearl Paint**, fifteen feet of brown paper is $4.69, and handmade paper inlaid with straw is $4.80 for six large sheets. For glamour-pusses, Mylar's cheap and chic at $2.39 for ten feet.

DO NOT PHONE: Send suggestions to Shyama Patel, *New York* Magazine, 444 Madison Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10022-6999, four weeks before the sale. Sales exclusive to "Sales & Bargains" and not previously advertised or published elsewhere will be given preference.

Fabric ribbons sold by the yard can cost a fortune at your neighborhood gift shop. Instead, hit the flower district. **B&J Florist Supplies** has large spools of every imaginable fabric ribbon, as well as simple ornaments with wire ends that twist onto gifts and trees. Twenty-five yards of velvet ribbon is $3.50; 10 yards of gold mesh is $6.50; 40 yards of satin is $6. Twist-on toppers include four dozen miniature red glass balls for $12.50.

Up the street, **Pany Silk Flowers** has twist-on paper rosebuds and violets ($5 to $7.50 a dozen). Or pick up a few stems of *faux* Queen Anne's lace ($3.50 to $5.50) and pansies ($1.25 to $2.75) and snip and string them together.

RTR Packaging, 27 W. 20th St., Suite 606 (620-0011); Pearl Paint, 308 Canal St. (431-7932); B&J New York Florist Supplies, 103 W. 28th St. (564-6086); Pany Silk Flowers, 146 W. 28th St. (645-9526); A Touch of Ivy, 25 E. 73rd St. (for information, call 609-252-1191).

Picks of the Week

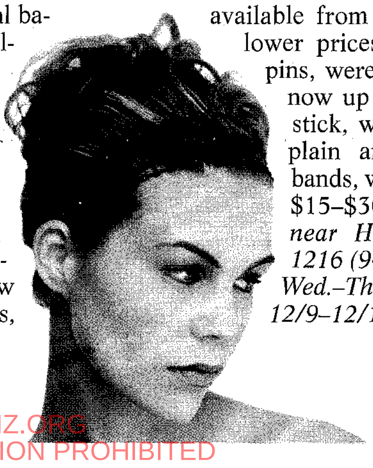
Patrick Robinson, an up-and-coming downtown designer, crafts some of the season's most coveted casual basics in luxurious wool and alpaca. This week, Robinson's opening his SoHo showroom to style setters who can't afford the usual uptown price tags. Prices on fall styles in winter white, gray, and berry tones are more than half off retail: alpaca coats, were $1,500, now $500; wool pants and skirts, were $400–$600, now $150–$300. Women's sizes 2–14. *84 Wooster St., second floor (431-1301); checks accepted; Mon.–Fri. 10–6; 12/7–12/11.*

Pixie Yates floral frocks, bright tweeds, and cute cotton twinsets are staples for flirty downtown girls. Usually selling at such sites as TG-170 and Bendel's, samples and stock are now more than half off: a blue houndstooth pleated skirt, was $150, now $50; an embroidered felt clutch, was $60, now $25. Cookies are free. Women's sizes P–L. *225 Lafayette St., Room 707 (431-3150); cash only; Wed.–Thurs. 10–7; 12/9–12/10.*

Susan Lazar, one of the fashion flock's favorite rising stars, usually retails at Bendel's and Saks. Must-have staples for fall and holiday wear are less than half-price at her showroom sale: a sleeveless eight-ply cashmere funnel-neck sweater retails at $400; here it's $180. A wool-jersey dress retails at $350; now it's $159. Women's sizes 2–12. *275 W. 39th Street, third floor (302-5888); A.E., M.C., V.; Mon.–Fri. 8–7; 12/7–12/11.*

Tracywatts millinery is usually $60–$400. For the sample sale, hundreds of her funky hats, including cowgirls in all colors, fedoras, cloches, and berets, as well as knit watch caps and kerchiefs, are at least half off, from $15–$100. *305 W. 20th St., front garden (727-7349); M.C., V.; Wed.–Sat. 11–7; 12/9–12/12.*

Colette Malouf designed the must-have headband that appeared on Michael Kors's runway and in his gift bags. Usually sold only at Bendel's and Saks, the delectable hair things are currently available from the source at far lower prices: butterfly bobby pins, were up to $28 a pair, now up to $10; resin hair stick, was $38, now $15; plain and beaded headbands, were $30–$60, now $15–$30. *594 Broadway, near Houston St., Suite 1216 (941-9588); M.C., V.; Wed.–Thurs. 5–7, Fri. 4–7; 12/9–12/11.*



Photographs: top, Amy Freeth; bottom, courtesy of Colette Malouf.

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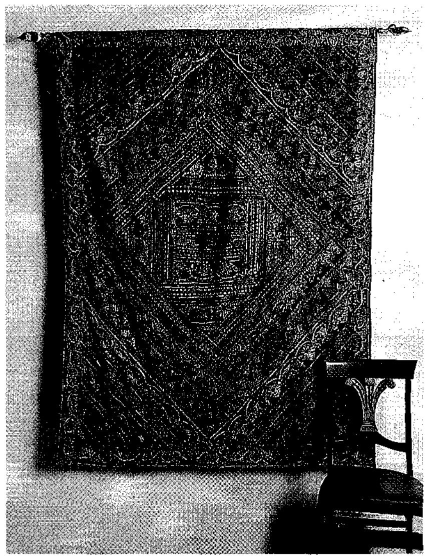

Phyllis Leibowitz's tiny warehouse space on a lonely corner of the West Side Highway is crammed with the glittery bedspreads, pillows, and wall hangings that she designs (when she's not styling fashion shoots) and has crafted from vintage textiles in India. Everything's now 30 to 50 percent off regular prices: patchwork bedspreads are $350, feather-filled sequin pillows start at $60, and teak coffee tables are $225 and up. *Chelsea Mini-Storage, 224 Twelfth Ave., at 28th St., Suite 26-433 (627-1436); A.E.; Fri.–Sun. 10–6; 12/11–12/13 and by appointment.*

Showroom Seven has hip, youthful European clothing lines like Ghost, Whistles, Amaya Arzuaga, and Beverly Mehl, as well as Erickson Beamon jewelry. Now all are available at more than half off usual retail. Sweater and skirt prices are $20–$200. *498 Seventh Ave., near 37th St., twenty-fourth floor (643-4810); A.E., M.C., V.; Mon.–Fri. 10–7; 12/8–12/18.*

Me & Ro chic, simple silver and ten-karat-gold jewelry is available at avant-garde places like Barneys' jewelry counter. At the studio, most styles are at least half off: earrings, were $65–$350, now $20–$90; bracelets, were $65–$400, now $20–$150. Current merchandise is 20 percent off. *270 Lafayette St., Suite 905 (431-8744); M.C., V.; Wed.–Fri. 1–7; 12/9–12/11.*

Joe Boxer's underwear and nighties make cheery, inexpensive stocking stuffers for men, women, and children. Now they're on sale for up to 75 percent off: prices range from $5 for boxers to $25 for satin pajamas. *1450 Broadway, at 41st St., fourth floor (354-2727); cash only; Mon.–Thurs. 9–5; 12/7–12/10.* ■

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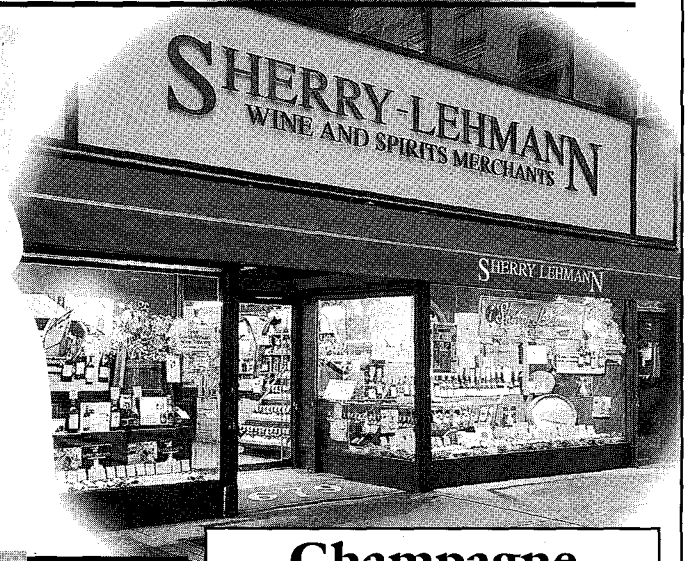

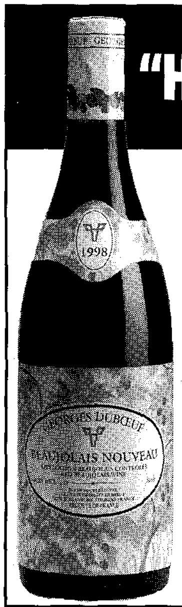

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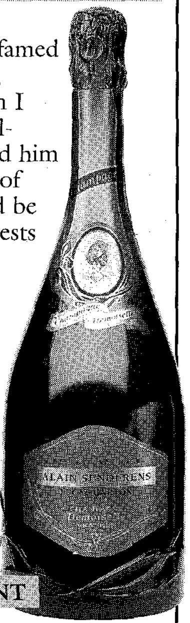

Alain Senderens, the renowned chef of Paris' famed restaurant Lucas Carton, explains: "In 1993, when I met my good friend Paul-Francois Vranken, I asked him to create a special cuvée of Champagne that I would be proud to serve to the guests of Lucas Carton.

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MOVIES **PETER RAINER**

New Pork, New Pork

A sequel to 'Babe' flops at the b.o. and costs a studio head his job—what do they know? Mixing among the pit bulls in Gotham, Babe triumphs hammily.

THE ADVANCE WORD ON **Babe: Pig in the City** WAS that it was "problematic"—studiospeak for uncommercial. Its benefit premiere in Los Angeles had been canceled amid dire rumors that the picture was too scary, too loud, too violent, too everything. This piqued my interest. *Babe II: Dark Meat*—what a concept! The first *Babe* was such a transcendently charming experience that redoing it wouldn't have worked anyway; it would be like trying to be a virgin again. Better to shake things up.

As it turns out, the new *Babe* isn't the horror show that was rumored. But it's certainly more raucous and rough-edged than the original. Arguably, it's even better. George Miller, the co-producer and co-writer of *Babe*, has directed and co-scripted the sequel, and his *Mad Max* dark roots are showing. The set pieces have a hearty grotesqueness, and the action is full-throttle. The film's showcase sequence is an extended chase in which the wee pig is pursued by a pit bull, and it has as much vroom as anything in *The Road Warrior.* I can understand why the executives at Universal were concerned: This sort of thing doesn't bode well for the franchise. So what? *Babe: Pig in the City* is every bit as funny as its predecessor, but it's funny in a screwier, twistier way.

Are you talkin' to me? Babe and pals get street smart in *Pig in the City.*

By bringing the pig into the urban hell of strays and pet impounders, Miller—with his co-writers, Judy Morris and Mark Lamprell, and his animal trainers and animatronic experts—opens up a brave new world. Babe is the country rube in the big city, but he's also the rube as holy fool. By the film's end, his goodness triumphs over the Gotham grunge. ("I'm just a pig on a mission," he says.) In *Babe,* he was a leader of sheep. Now he's a leader of men—and ducks, chimps, poodles, even pit bulls. His innocence proves cast-iron.

Babe is first brought to the city by Farmer Hoggett's ovoid wife, Esme (Magda Szubanski), in a botched plan to feature him in a fair and use the fee to stave off the farm's foreclosure. They end up residents in a four-story rooming house—the Flealands Hotel—catering to pets. From its attic lookout, Babe surveys the skyline—it's the shot used in ads for the film—and sees a scrunched mélange of Manhattan, Hong Kong, Hollywood, Paris. It's an intimidating vista. By contrast, the rooming house is a romper-room oasis. The rickety, dark-toned majesty of the place suits its denizens, including the courtly orangutan Thelonius; Bob the hepcat chimp and his wife, Zootie, and brother, Easy; and, among other squallers and squawkers, a Neapolitan mastiff, an English bulldog, and a fleet-fingered capuchin monkey. If Charles Dickens had created a bestiary, it might have resembled this one: It's positively jovial with oddity.

Miller doesn't ask us to recognize the humanness of these critters. He doesn't go in for a lot of goopy anthropomorphism. Instead, he exults in his menagerie's animalness. In *Babe: Pig in the City,* being an animal is the highest station in life. The people we see—not just the porcine Esme but also her flamingo-thin husband, Farmer Hoggett (James Cromwell), and the rooming-house landlady (Mary Stein), with her whippet profile, and the chipmunk-cheeked clown Fugly Floom (Mickey Rooney)—haven't quite achieved the full-fledged look of their bestial counterparts. They're honorary members of the club, animals-in-transition.

The film is full of exemplary gestures, like the way Thelonius attempts to save his goldfish friend from marauding animal impounders without thinking to save himself; or the pelican who transports the wisequacking Ferdinand the duck in his bill before releasing him high above the city with the words "Farewell, noble duck." Flealick the arthritic terrier spins out in a chase and has an enchanted, end-of-life reverie in which he leaps loose-limbed at butterflies. And then there's Babe's finest moment, when he suddenly wheels around in that pit-bull chase and calmly asks his pursuer: "One simple question. Why?"

Babe doesn't comprehend why animals—or people—self-destructively play out their natures. The pit bull clues him in: "I have a professional obligation to be malicious." And yet, when Babe's

(continued on page 67)

Photograph courtesy of Mill Film/Universal City Studios.

HAIR APPARENT

Photo: Nubest & Co. Salon

CITY SALONS TO SUIT EVERY STYLE

Small Photos: Left: Tony Anderson of FPC International; Right: Riccardo Maggiore Salon

Photo: Nubest & Co. Salon

Stuck in a hairstyle rut? New York's top salons offer an increasingly sophisticated range of services and products to update your look while improving the sheen, cut, and texture of your tresses. If you've admired the cut or coif sported by a model or a celeb, you're in luck. In Manhattan, the same stylists that create glamour on the runway can offer you dazzling precision cuts, shimmering colors, and new treatments to restore body and shine.

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FADED GLORY?

Your new hair color looked rich and glossy when you left the salon. But a few short weeks later, it's faded and drab. That's just how it is, you've been told. No longer. At **ArrojoCutler**, a hip salon in Manhattan's Galleria, top colorist Tarah Steele creates lush, long-lasting colors with the AVEDA Full Spectrum™ line. "These colors don't just sit on the hair cuticle; they develop inside the cortical fiber, so they're seven times more resistant to shampoo fading–and twice as resistant to UV fading. Because they're 97% natural, they maintain condition and add a beautiful shine," she says. To ensure that your new color complements your cut, Steele consults with the stylist who will be doing the cutting. The result? Model-perfect hair in a friendly, relaxed environment, where there are "stars" but no prima donnas. And, as for Nick Arrojo and Rodney Cutler, owners with international recognition, their prices are extremely affordable.

LIGHTEN UP

Is there anything as glamorous as subtle highlights? But sometimes highlights can be too light, brassy–or just unnatural. Jody Pollutro and partner Ron Ortiz at **Salon JPRO** have solved this problem. "Along with the highlights, we do two different shades of lowlights," says Pollutro. "You get more depth of color, which is more attractive and more natural. Not only do you get better contrast, this method can be more economical. For example, if your base color is a light brown and the highlights are blonde, you'd probably need a touchup every two to three months. But when you use lowlights, you may get away with just two or three times a year. Also the grow-out is better because you're not always looking at dark roots."

FREQUENT DYERS

Frequent flyers get bonuses–so why shouldn't frequent dyers? If you color your hair at **David Groshen's Salon East**, you're enrolled in the Frequent Dyer program–and you get points you can use for manicures, pedicures, haircuts–or the next color job. You get 10 dyer points for single process, 15 for highlights–or for Groshen's new Multi-Spectrum coloring, which he describes as "a beautiful clash of color, a co-mingled spectrum of cools and warms that work together to create an enhanced natural look. With this method, lustrous tonal highs and enigmatic lows are strategically placed to create the best browns, the most radical reds, and the brightest blondes." Clients are also soothed with a warm towel and neck massage after every shampoo.

MASTER SCULPTING

Haircuts are serious business at **EIJI**, an inviting Madison Avenue salon dedicated exclusively to hair services. Here, the hair is literally "sculpted" while it's dry, a process that takes an hour and a half. Why dry? "This gives a better, more accurate cut," Eiji explains. "There is greater precision and more control–and you will not end up with hair that is shorter than you want, which can happen when hair is cut wet." The test of a good haircut? Eiji says: "Hair should always have shape and movement that comes from the cut–and not from blow-drying or styling."

Since every client's hair is different, every haircut is different." After the hair has been sculpted, an expert colorist can suggest a new shade of color to complement the cut.

MAXIMUM BOB

"My trademark cut is the bob," says Miwa of **Miwa•Alex**. "It's very distinct and it combines the precision cutting I learned at Sassoon with my own personal 1999 styling." Miwa's bob can be graduated or cut with layers. In addition to expert cutting, the salon offers a full menu of services, including color and fashion consultation and wedding hair and makeup. Miwa, formerly the principal creative director at Vidal Sassoon, teaches hair styling courses and make-up seminars and conducts professional training sessions. Her partner Alex owns salons in Japan and Taiwan. Together, they take an international approach to beauty. "East meets West at our salon. We exchange the latest techniques with stylists from England and Asia," Miwa says. "And we use products from all over the world."

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"Most of our clients are busy professionals who want low-maintenance hair-styling," says Gloria Cabrera of the **Gloria Cabrera Hair Salon and Spa**. "Our most popular cut is somewhere between the chin and shoulders, with medium-to-long layers and broken lines to give a soft finish. These are customized and framed according to the shape of the client's face. To complement the line of the haircuts, our expert colorist, Franco Pulice, is doing warm colors for the colder weather, brighter colors to frame the face. We may give highlights around the face and do the rest of the hair in softer shades. These highlights are particularly good for women who have some gray around the face—because they camouflage the gray and give a very natural look. The looks we create are great for everyday," adds Cabrera, whose full-service salon is staffed by a team of international beauty experts. "And with a bit of styling and

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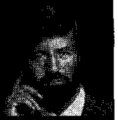

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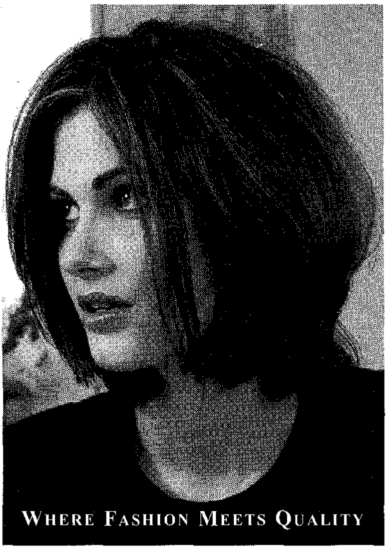

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some gel or mousse to give more lift and bounce, they can be dressed up for the holidays. We can do this in the salon–or the client can do it at home, by setting the hair with a few velcro rollers."

a new you

If you're ready for a new look, the **Riccardo Maggiore Salon** will create a new image that's right for your personality and lifestyle. "Our clients want styles that can go from the gym to the office or to a party with ease," says Riccardo, "and that's what we give them. Before we do any work, we consult with the client about his or her lifestyle and personality–and the image they want to project. Since drastic change is rarely a positive experience, we create new looks that don't cross the client's boundaries of change. If a client wishes to go from long hair to short, but has never had short hair, we recommend making the change a gradual process. During this process the client can try different styles and have fun while doing so. When it's a client's first time with color, we introduce it gradually and subtly." Says Maggiore, "If, for example, highlights are wanted, we would do very thin sections widely dispersed, so the effect is very natural. Recently we've introduced this subtle color technique to many of our male clients. Creating new looks takes time. We do not rush our work and this makes the experience all the more pleasurable."

PHOTO FINISHES

"We specialize in blow-drying, blow-straightening, and finishing the hair," says Renato Vasconcelos of **Color & Cut.** "Our signature is a simple, straight, no-nonsense look that shows off a cut to its best advantage. At least half of our clients–many of them are Wilhelmina models–come in just for our finishing services, which have been written up in *Vogue* and *Allure.* We give the same care and attention to all our clients. We're not concerned with getting them out of the chair in a hurry, and we don't take an assembly-line approach. We even open at 8 a.m., so they can come in before work, if that's more convenient. "Of course, we give great cuts," Vasconcelos adds, "but our clients don't have to wait a day or two to see that they have a good cut. Because we take such care with the finishing, they can walk out the door, step into a limo, and go anywhere."

banish the frizzies

You want to trade in those curls and frizzies for a sleek, straight style–but you're afraid you'll damage your hair. Not at **Hair Fashions East by George Buckner**, a full-service salon with special expertise in chemical services. "I can successfully and safely remove excess curl or frizz," says owner George Buckner. "You can decide to simply loosen the curl or straighten it completely. The relaxer system we use is completely different from anyone else's–and we have a pre- and post-relaxing care program." Buckner also treats various scalp problems, as well as hair damaged by overprocessing–and by over-

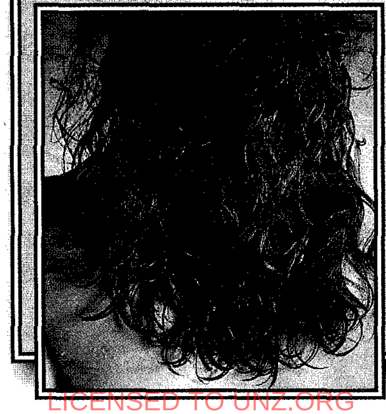

Photo: ©Diane Padys for ITG International the-counter relaxers. "One client, a European lady, tried a drugstore preparation that damaged her hair so badly that she came in crying. She'd been told there was nothing to do but cut it all off. I was able to restore it. Since I've had 35 years experience, I usually can. I use the finest products from France, England, and the United States."

a kinder, gentler salon

"When I opened my salon, I wanted to give high quality services at reasonable prices," says Ashraf of the **Prana Hair Salon**. Her vision also included a soft pastel environment, with flattering peach lighting and lovely flowered kimonos instead of the usual utilitarian smocks. Ashraf has definite opinions about hair color, as well. "Too many women still wear those harsh ashy blondes that make them look green. I prefer the softer shades, the strawberry or honey blondes. And I like to change haircolor with the seasons—lighter in the summer and warmer in winter." When it comes to haircuts, she's even more specific. "Your hair is like the frame of a painting. It must fit and complement the shape of your head as well as your facial features. If you have deep set eyes, for example, then fringes (bangs) would be flattering. And if you are over 40, don't listen to stylists who tell you to cut your hair. Hair around your face has a softening effect, while short hair will only make you look older."

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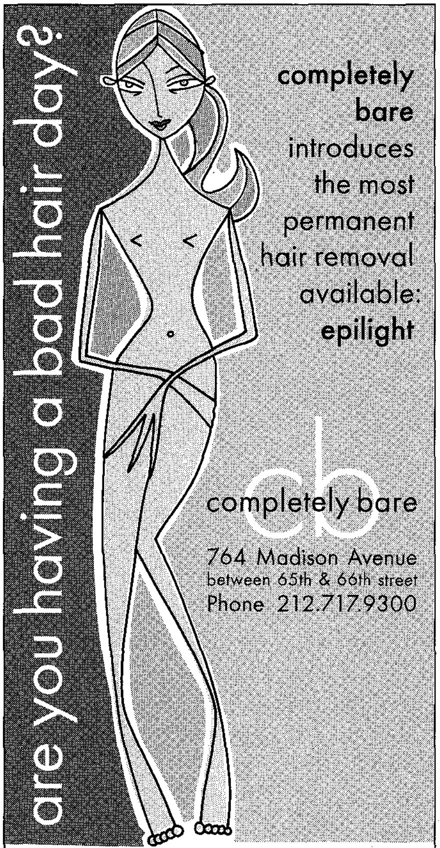

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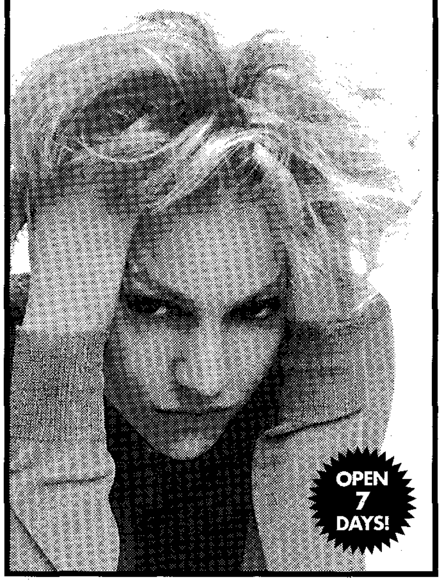

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TAKE IT ALL OFF

If you've been plucked, waxed, needled, and lasered, all in hopes of a smooth upper lip or a silky bikini line, follow the lead of top supermodels. Pay a visit to **completely bare** for the newest technology in long-lasting hair removal: the EpiLight™ photo-epilation system. At this sleek, French-decorated townhouse suite on Madison Avenue, every client gets celebrity pampering, with comfy robes, designer water, fresh fruit, and a complimentary paraffin hand treatment. As for the business of removing that unsightly hair: it's done with an application of cool gel, followed by a quick zap of pulsating light. As if by magic, the hair is permanently altered and regrowth is virtually eliminated.

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"Hair loss is painful for both sexes–but when a woman loses her hair, her whole image changes," says Elline Surianello of **LeMetric**. "Her femininity is affected, even her sexuality. It's like gaining a lot of weight or growing older. You not only look different, you feel different about yourself. And that's the problem we tackle." Surianello speaks with authority, for it was after she solved her own hair loss problem that she dedicated herself to providing other women with discreet, sensitive, and personalized hair replacement service. "When you realize you don't have to live with the problem, when you see that you can have beautiful hair again, it's totally transforming–everything changes."

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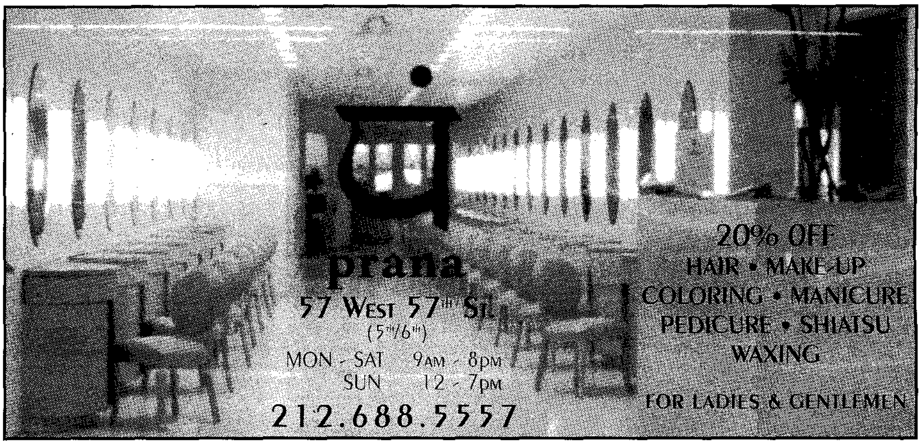

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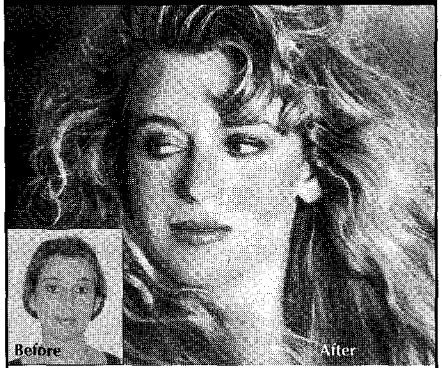

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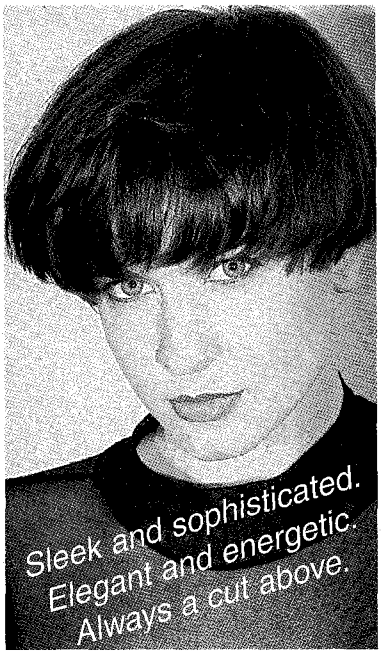
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Rainer *continued from page 58*

generosity redeems his attacker, it's as if all of evolution had suddenly been overruled. Babe brings together dogs and cats, pink poodles and pit bulls. Kids barred from this movie by wary parents are missing out on a helluva role model.

Still, I don't want to overstate the film's goody-goodyness. *Babe: Pig in the City* is no *Gandhi.* It's also not an archetypal quest. In interviews, Miller has attempted to frame Babe as a mythic hero à la Joseph Campbell and all that jazz. But this is not at all how we experience the porker. (Miller blabbed the same line when he made the *Mad Max* movies, and *Lorenzo's Oil,* too. He's got myth-on-the-mind.) If the new *Babe* should be compared to anything, it's to those epic questers the Marx Brothers. Whether he admits it or not, Miller is a gonzo first and an educator second—a distant second. His new film is too *spirited* to be instructional. It's all over the place. At times it seems to summon up the whole history of show business, from fleabag vaudeville animal-novelty acts to the latest in animatronic whoop-de-doo. The animals are like the apotheosis of all the performing pets we've ever seen in the movies; each one is a stunner, and because they can talk, they're more vivid—and, for that reason, a bit more nightmarish too. They assume personalities that remind us of everybody from mafiosi to the Beats, and the shock is in how easily we buy the transformation. After a while, there's no dissonance at all: The alternate universe has become the real universe.

Miller loves the clangor of butting high culture with low. It's no accident that the HOLLYWOOD sign sits across from the Eiffel Tower in his skyline. Once again, as in the original *Babe,* he mixes in music from Saint-Saëns's Third Symphony—and it has never sounded better than when it's being trilled by singing mice. Elvis and Edith Piaf are similarly mouseketeered. He has the film's narrator say: "You can't always put things back together, but sometimes you can look at things afresh," and that's what he's done here. He's bid a frenzied farewell to the old *Babe* and given us a delirious new joyride.

In brief: I can't join in with the prevailing opinion that Walter Salles's **Central Station** is on par with early De Sica—I love early De Sica too much. But in this otherwise rather schematic swatch of social catharsis, Brazil's Fernanda Montenegro gives the best performance by an actress I've seen all year. De Sica might not have made this movie, but he would have recognized in her bitter, beseeching portrayal a kindred character. ▬

Peter Rainer's 1998 reviews are available at **newyorkmag.com**.

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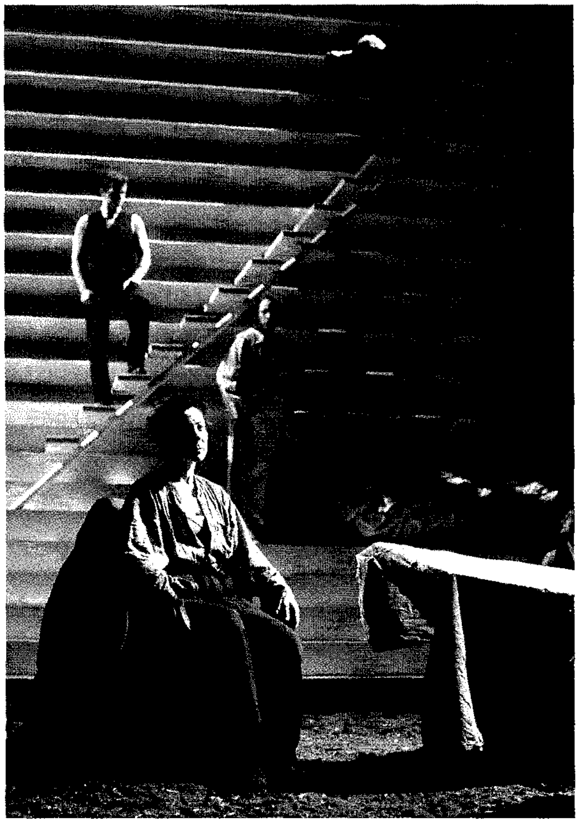
THEATER **JOHN SIMON**

Electra Shock

Zöe Wanamaker's punk haircut is a metaphor for this junk production of Sophocles' monumental tragedy, which has been shorn of all its grandeur.



In the name of the father: Zöe Wanamaker with a few members of her dysfunctional household.

DAVID LEVEAUX'S INSPIRATION FOR STAGING THE **Electra** of Sophocles was a little girl in a Sarajevo documentary struck dumb by the death of her brother. But who in this production displays what Leveaux calls that "inconsolable silence"? Pylades is (rather awkwardly) written as a nonspeaking part, and the two silent members of the three-woman Chorus are no little girls, and quite marginal besides. The Chorus leader and, of course, Electra talk a blue streak. And here, there is no murderous mortar fire, and no war. As that subtle classical scholar Bernard Knox has shown, this is family, not societal, drama; in this, unlike in other Sophoclean plays, the *polis* does not exist. The violence is intramural.

Apropos intramural, Johan Engels's set is part dilapidated palace façade with fire escapes leading nowhere, and part adjoining sandlot with broken-down salon chairs inexplicably scattered about. In the middle is a mystery Thing. Propped up at one end by a broken-off marble Ionian capital is a long, slanting wooden board, suggesting a collapsed catafalque. Nonchalantly draped around its head in artfully flowing folds is a dirty old sheet, which Woman 3 will later throw on as a shawl. Still later, when Orestes and Pylades go about their bloody errand, she makes up the Thing as a bed, with that sheet nicely folded down for, I presume, the royal corpses to slide in comfortably. At other times, the Thing is a combination horse and trampoline for Electra's gymnastics.

Mycenae, we gather, is afflicted with creeping mutism, but those who speak display no consistent accent. Electra is veddy British, Clytemnestra and Orestes vestigially so, Chrysothemis mid-Atlantic, the Tutor (here called Servant) stage-American, Aegisthus street-American, and Woman 1 gutter-American. Further, the two female mutes act not at all shell-shocked: They solicitously hug or support Electra, crawl with her when she crawls, but never say boo. Often, however, they circle around her, like jackals wanting to make sure their dinner is indeed dead.

Sophocles writes glorious poetry and poetic prose to which Frank McGuinness's translation does splendid, actable justice. But some actors declaim it with that incipient sob that used to be the sine qua non of the grand style, while others trundle along prosily. Electra recites, rants, whimpers, or rails sarcastically for yocks. As Zoë Wanamaker plays her, she is part Madwoman of Chaillot wearing her father's tattered clothes, part Ursula the pigwoman from *Bartholomew Fair*, and two parts Gelsomina from *La Strada*. If her balding-hedgehog hairdo were blonde, she would, with hopping gait and clownish mannerisms, be a fair caricature of Giulietta Masina. An actress possessed of a large bag of tricks, she is dead set on not sparing us a single one.

As Clytemnestra, Claire Bloom, wearing Johan Engels's Jezebel red, looks great but gives a routine performance. Michael Cumpsty's Orestes is a confused, grandstanding jock, intoning his lines with stentorian plangency. Marin Hinkle's Chrysothemis is a skittish teenager with a whiny singsong, and Stephen Spinella's old tutor sounds a bit too fruity, and walks, gestures, and hefts Electra like no graybeard ever. Pat Carroll's huge Woman 1 looks and sounds like the Platonic idea of a fishwife; as Woman 2, Mirjana Jokovic is reduced to a jittery scaredy-cat. Myra Lucretia Taylor is, quite offensively, turned into a black mammy as Woman 3, who also makes the beds. Daniel Oreskes, costumed as a Mycenaean Tom Wolfe, is a crude Aegisthus; Ivan Stamenov, the Pylades, is gotten up as a Greek fisher-boy catamite for Anglophone tourists, which may be why he keeps timorously mum.

When, finally, someone pushes aside the ostensibly heavy back-wall gate like an easily sliding door, to reveal an operettaish white staircase in near-two-dimensional cross section, the production at last fully acknowledges its flatness. ■

John Simon's 1997–98 reviews are available on the Web at **newyorkmag.com**.

Photograph by Joan Marcus.

CLASSICAL MUSIC **PETER G. DAVIS**

You Go, Girl

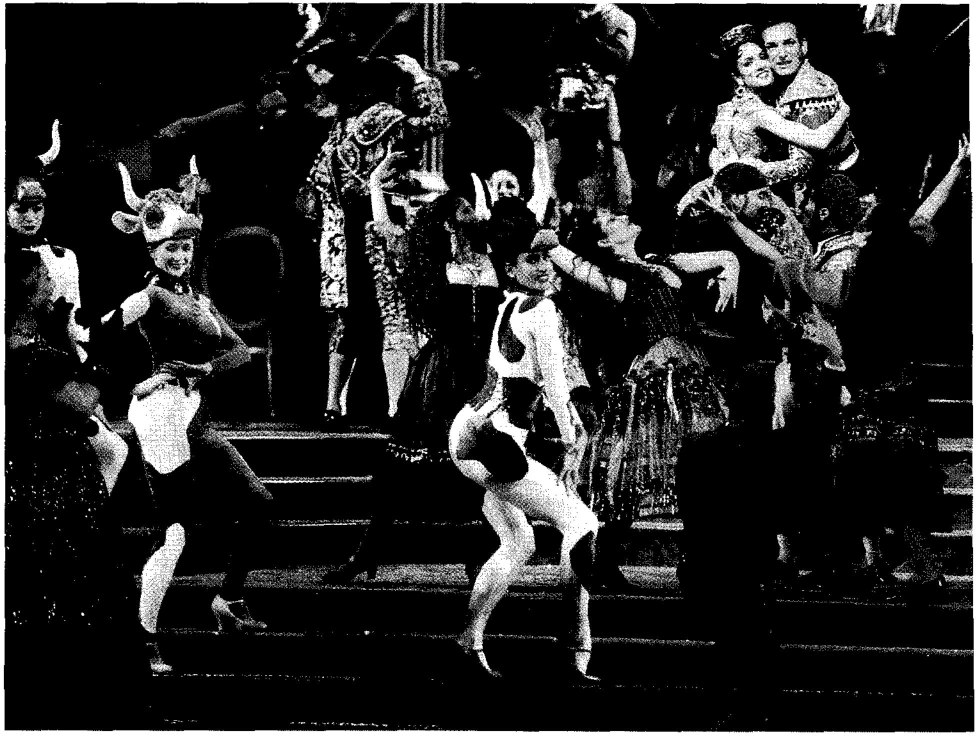
Long on décor and devoid of feeling for the dying Violetta, Zeffirelli's production of 'La Traviata' seems to have taken its design cue from 'The Will Rogers Follies.'

IT WOULD TAKE A SMALL BOOK TO DETAIL ALL THE backstage intrigue and cast changes that helped sabotage the Metropolitan Opera's new **La Traviata** production, originally conceived for opera's dream couple Angela Gheorghiu and Roberto Alagna. Perhaps in the end it didn't really matter who sang, since Franco Zeffirelli, who also designed and directed the Met's last *Traviata,* was always going to be the star of this one as well. He also turns out to be the principal villain. Once again, Zeffirelli has more or less abandoned the cast—and Verdi's opera, for that matter—to revel in his obsession with interior design. Can this be the same man who, 40 years ago, helped Maria Callas create her legendary Violetta? Hard to believe. A designer-director once considered a theatrical genius has by now pretty much disintegrated into a window dresser.

Violetta's overstuffed salon is just a teaser for the country villa we behold in Act Two, as huge as a Mussolini train station and cluttered with china bric-a-brac and a jungle of plants—no longer a kept woman, Violetta is apparently trying to decide whether she should open a nursery or a whatnot shop. Flora's party takes place in a garish hotel lobby choking in lace and spangled red drapery, an appropriately tacky setting for a bullfight ballet that must be seen to be believed, complete with ballerinas dressed as cows in tights and high heels. Zeffirelli saves his most childish coup for the last scene. Violetta's sickroom rises on a stage elevator to return us to the Act One salon so that the dying woman can rush downstairs and expire in Alfredo's arms—a mindless scenic innovation that does absolutely nothing for the opera. Perhaps all this irrelevant decoration would not seem so irritating if Zeffirelli had paid any attention to the drama or the people who make it live. On the contrary, the whole vacuous production looks like a revival perfunctorily thrown together by a hack house director.

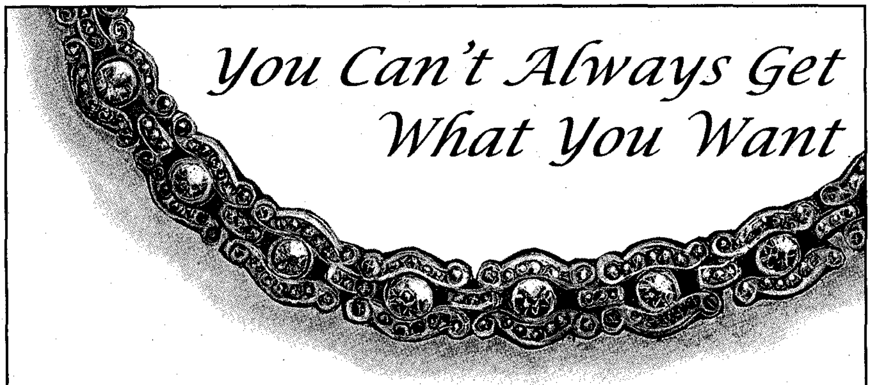
The three principal singers on opening night, clearly not the Met's first choices, had neither the stage savvy nor the vocal charisma to compete with Zeffirelli's décor and make sufficiently strong statements on their own. Patricia Racette is a sympathetic, generous performer, but her soprano lacks color, nuance, and easy agility, and she has only just begun to explore Violetta's complex character. Marcelo Alvarez seems just as callow as Alfredo, a tenor with a lovely lyrical quality but only a vague idea of what to do with it. As father Germont, Haijing Fu has difficulty simply sustaining a steady tone while quietly fading into the scenery. As usual when presiding over what he senses to be a lost cause, James Levine rushes through the score with appalling insensitivity. Nobody wins in this ill-fated *Traviata,* Verdi least of all.

JUST IN TIME FOR CHRISTMAS, THE NEW YORK PHILHARMONIC has released the ultimate recorded Mahler collection, a celebration of both the composer and the orchestra that he once led as music director. On twelve CDs, **The Mahler Broadcasts, 1948–1982** contains live Philharmonic performances of the ten symphonies, *Das Lied von der Erde,* and *Songs of a Wayfarer,* and the names of the conductors alone are enough to send shivers: Barbirolli, Boulez, Kubelik, Mehta, Mitropoulos, Solti, Steinberg, Stokowski, Tennstedt, and Walter—all noted Mahlerians presiding over scores that, in several instances, they never recorded commercially. Two big books come with the discs, a 500-page treasure trove of essays, interviews, texts, and translations, contemporary program notes and reviews, photos from the Philharmonic archives, a full documentation of Mahler's years with the Philharmonic (1909 to 1911), and a list of the orchestra's Mahler performances from 1904 to 1998. If that weren't enough, a fascinating two-hour radio documentary, assembled in 1964 by William Mal-



Even cowgirls get the blues: The party scene from *La Traviata.*

Photograph by Beatriz Schiller.



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loch, is also included, with recollections by musicians who knew Mahler or performed under his baton.

Where among all this largesse, I hear you ask, is the Philharmonic's own Leonard Bernstein? No conductor did more to bring Mahler into the symphonic mainstream, and none did more to consolidate this orchestra's special relationship to Mahler's music. The answer, of course, is that Bernstein's performances with the Philharmonic are all readily available elsewhere, so it was only logical to give these rarities preference. As with the orchestra's previous archival release, the material has been selected by Sedgwick Clark, a connoisseur of orchestral performance live and on disc, whose brief but eloquent commentary tells us exactly why each selection has a claim on our attention.

One could argue with Clark here and there, but after listening to the entire set I don't feel inclined to dispute any of his choices. Not one performance failed to give me some fresh insight into a composer I thought I had OD'd on long ago. Even Zubin Mehta outdoes himself in the Second—this was the Philharmonic's 10,000th concert, on March 7, 1982, and everyone involved rises nobly to the occasion. The enigmatic Seventh Symphony has long been a stumbling block, even for Mahler fanatics, but the score sounds positively incandescent in this performance, thanks to Kubelik's passionate advocacy and the orchestra's virtuosity. Mitropoulos's Sixth is another magnificent achievement, an interpretation that seems hewn out of a single huge piece of marble, and Stokowski is just the conductor to keep the massive choral-and-orchestral forces of the Eighth in line without sacrificing a moment of the score's cosmic theatricality. For me, though, the set's high point, at least in terms of sheer on-the-spot, live-performance inspiration, is Tennstedt's electrifying account of the Fifth. The sonic quality may vary, but careful remastering by Seth Winner and Jon Samuels assures that even the earliest performance—a 1948 *Das Lied von der Erde* conducted by Walter with Kathleen Ferrier and Set Svanholm—represents the best broadcast sound of the period.

If Mahler is your composer, clearly these discs are indispensable. The price is $225 (plus applicable sales tax), and the boxed set may be ordered by phone (800-557-826), fax (317-781-4608), Internet (www.newyorkphilharmonic.org), or mail (New York Philharmonic, 5804 Churchman By-Pass, Indianapolis, IN 46203), or purchased at Lincoln Center's gift shops and Tower Records. ■

Peter G. Davis's 1997–98 reviews are available at **newyorkmag.com**.

DANCE TOBI TOBIAS

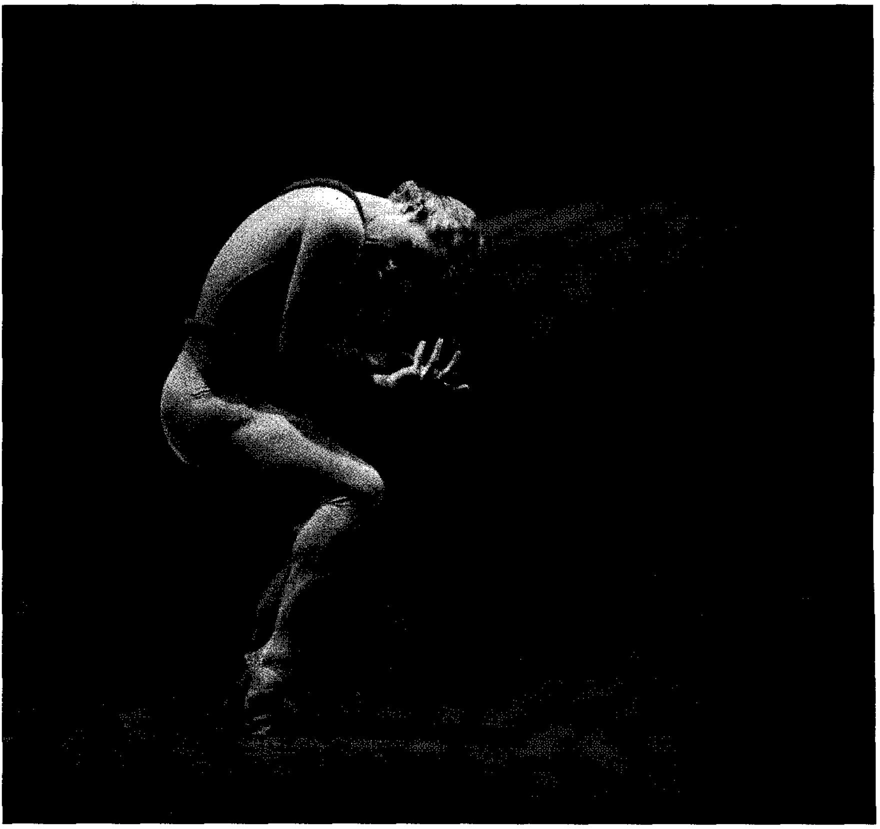
Stardust Memories

The New York City Ballet's fiftieth anniversary stirs thoughts of the days of Balanchine and illustrious dancers past.

On October 11, 1948, the New York City Ballet made its official debut at the City Center. At that moment, the succession of companies formed by George Balanchine and Lincoln Kirstein to create a contemporary American version of dance classicism took a critical step toward becoming an established institution. To celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of the landmark event, the company opened its winter season at the New York State Theater with a gala offering the all-Balanchine debut program: **Concerto Barocco**, **Orpheus**, and **Symphony in C**. After the annual stretch of *Nutcrackers*, and continuing through its spring season, the troupe will present 100 ballets from its incomparable repertory. Some will be new, to underline the fact that the NYCB has always been forward-looking. The best of the rest will be Balanchine's, the next-best those of Jerome Robbins, whose fertile talent would have made him top man anywhere but in this company, which remains dominated by Balanchine's genius. The work of Peter Martins, who now leads the NYCB, will be represented, of course, but circumspectly, as is fitting on such an occasion.

There's absolutely no point in reviewing the gala as if it were an ordinary performance, detailing its high points and its failings. (No doubt the fateful evening in 1948 had its own pluses and minuses.) Neither is it fair to take this single showing as the final measure of how the NYCB has managed its overwhelming inheritance. To my eyes, the performance was typical of what I was seeing last year. The dancing seems clearer and more robust than it has in the past decade or so, when one yearned desperately to have Balanchine back to coach and inspire. Compared with the performances that were guided by Balanchine, today's renditions look diminished in scale and depleted in temperament. And the casting is, as more often than not under Martins, largely unfathomable. *Concerto Barocco* and *Symphony in C* promise to endure to thrill our descendants, while *Orpheus*, alas, no longer works. The special evening, dedicated to the inimitable Balanchine ballerina Tanaquil Le Clercq, included a succinct, telling film tribute to her and an audience-wide vodka toast to "George" and "Lincoln," may their memory be blessed.

One of the first of several nonperformance activities scheduled for the anniversary year was a reunion of former members of the New York City Ballet. Since the event was on the agenda announced in the press kit for the season, I phoned the company's press office to ask if I might attend. "It's a family affair," explained the press rep. "No journalists." This seemed to me altogether reasonable—indeed, fitting—until he added, with some embarrassed reluctance, "Except for Anna and Clive," referring to the dance critics of New York's *Times* and *Post*. A week later, he phoned to inform me that the powers that be—who remained stubbornly unidentified—had changed their collective mind, and that people on the "gala press list" (this, apparently, includes the critic from *New York* Magazine) were invited, since "it would not be a good idea to introduce the anniversary year with bad feelings." By then, the ways of the world having proved too political for me, I had decided to stay safely at home and revel privately in my personal recollection of several generations of the NYCB's incomparable dancers.



Nilas Martins in the NYCB's revived *Orpheus*.

I began watching the company in the fifties, when a quintet of highly individual ballerinas reigned over the female roster. My favorite wasn't Maria Tallchief (the scintillating unofficial prima) but rather the gentle, lyrical Diana Adams and Le Clercq, all elegance and wit, with those rapier legs. Alongside them danced Melissa Hayden and Patricia Wilde, earthier angels; they were soon joined by the ineffable Allegra Kent. The next wave of stars, equally distinctive and memorable, included Patricia McBride (irresistible, and intensely theatrical, in

Photograph by Costas.

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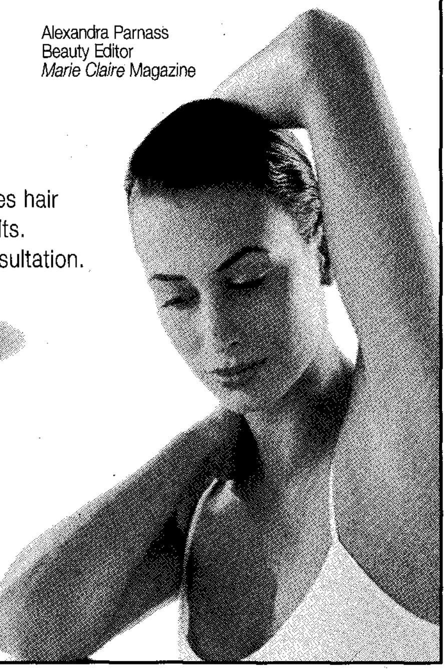

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allegro work), Suzanne Farrell (a sensuous adagio dancer and perhaps Balanchine's most compelling inspiration), Merrill Ashley (who brought fresh air to technical exactitude), and Gelsey Kirkland (ill-fated, but divinely gifted). Their successors included Kyra Nichols and Darci Kistler, who are still performing; if you've seen them, you know their magic. Clearly, throughout Balanchine's tenure, and often with significant input from Jerome Robbins, who usefully saw dancers from his own angle, the women of the company were unmatched.

The men I remember most vividly from the early years are Nicholas Magallanes and Francisco Moncion, because Balanchine was able to choreograph so evocatively for their unique personalities—of body and spirit. Neither dancer was a formidable technician; it didn't matter. Animated by Balanchine, they became consequential artists. When *they* took the principal roles in *Orpheus,* the ballet was resonant. Over the years, as male technique in the company grew generally stronger, practitioners like Jacques d'Amboise, Edward Villella, Arthur Mitchell, and Peter Boal defined and refined the American meaning of the term *danseur noble.* The male roster was simultaneously invigorated by an infusion of Scandinavian men (with Helgi Tomasson, Ib Andersen, and Peter Martins predominant) whom Balanchine appreciated as much for their onstage modesty as for their skills; they offered dancing, not ego.

Most of the dancers I've named so far were Balanchine's instruments by instinct or became so through experience. A few imports—from Europe; from American Ballet Theater, which could seem equally distant from Balanchine country—remained "other," though each enlivened and enhanced the performance (sometimes even the creation) of the repertory: the virtuoso cavalier André Eglevsky, the dramatic dancer Nora Kaye, the musically astute Violette Verdy, and the dazzling Mikhail Baryshnikov, who sensibly wanted to be where ballet was best, but whose destiny lay outside the NYCB's confines.

I remember other principals whose combined contribution made the New York City Ballet's glorious history possible, other soloists and ensemble members, too—for this company was, and remains, one in which rank does not entirely determine role. Though as a social curiosity, the reunion might have been fun to attend, having thought it over I see I have no need to ogle or chat up the later, offstage selves of the people who remain frozen in time and eternally luminous as creatures who embodied George Balanchine's (and Jerome Robbins's) imagination. ■

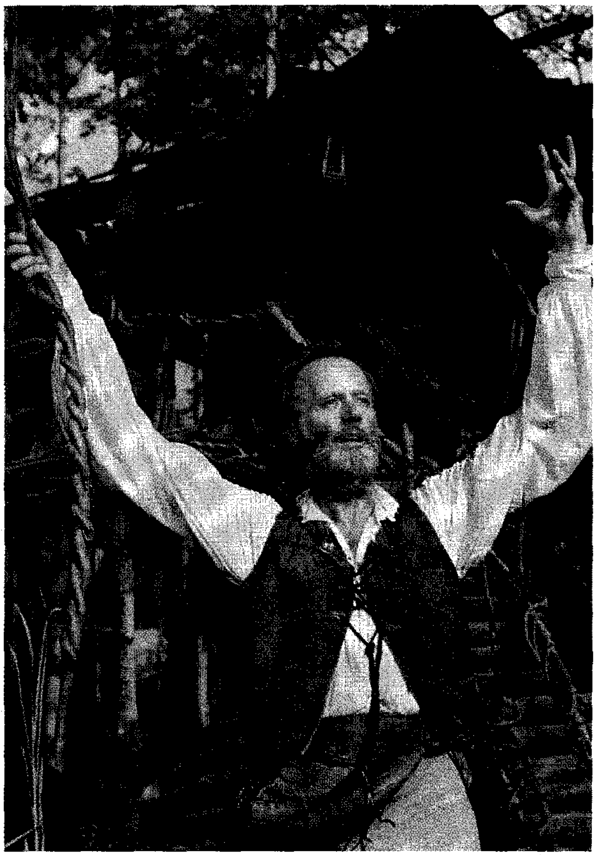
Tobi Tobias's 1997–98 reviews are available at **newyorkmag.com**.

TELEVISION JOHN LEONARD

Prospero in Dixie

Shakespeare's valedictory has been set in many exotic locales over the centuries; why not the antebellum South, with Peter Fonda brave in the New World?

WHEN HAROLD BLOOM FINALLY GETS around to *The Tempest* in his new book on Shakespeare, his gorge has risen to the highest of dudgeons. While it's perfectly clear to Bloom that Prospero is an "anti-Faust," and *The Tempest* is Will's "final transcending of Marlowe," contemporary "bespoilers" of this "visionary comedy" are driven entirely by ideology. In the worst instance, "Caliban, a poignant but cowardly (and murderous) half-human creature (his father a sea devil, whether fish or amphibian), has become an African-Caribbean heroic Freedom Fighter. This is not even a weak misreading; anyone who arrives at that view is simply not interested in reading the play at all. Marxists, multiculturalists, feminists, nouveau historicists—the usual suspects—know their causes but not Shakespeare's plays."



I'm not here to pick a fight with Bloom. But messing with Shakespeare in general has a long and lively tradition of its own, from Akira Kurosawa to Jane Smiley to Al Pacino. And messing with *The Tempest* in particular gave us a superior Hollywood western (*Yellow Sky,* with Anne Baxter as a ghost-town Miranda), a superior science-fiction film (*Forbidden Planet,* in which Ariel was a robot), and John Cassavetes stranded on a Greek Island (*Tempest*). *The Tempest* also haunts the pages of Toni Morrison's *Tar Baby* and got one of its most memorable stagings, as a play by Earl the Pearl Shakespeare, on a basketball court in a ghetto in John Edgar Wideman's *Philadelphia Fire.* Tiresome as it may be for Bloom to visit yet another contested site in postcolonial studies, is it so surprising that African-Caribbeans, force-fed English literature as schoolboys, should use *The Tempest* to think about islands, language, and master-slave relationships? "You taught me language; and my profit on 't / Is, I know how to curse: the red plague rid you, / For learning me your language!"

Nor am I even here to pick a fight with NBC, the network that's already blamed Dostoevsky and the American public for the ratings failure of its ludicrous TV-movie version of *Crime and Punishment,* which disaster doubtless accounts for the fainthearted postponement of its not quite so ludicrous production of **The Tempest** from last month's sweeps to this week's doldrums (Sunday, December 13; 9 to 11 P.M.). So what if they omit Shakespeare's language? Haven't they added an American Civil War? Anyway, do we really and truly need, before our revels now are ended, a great globe or a solemn temple, the past as prologue or a brave new world, strange bedfellows and dumb discourse and such stuff as dreams are made on, so long as we have special effects from the folks who gave us *Merlin*?

As Gideon Prosper, Peter Fonda gives good drench. Having abandoned the running of his antebellum slave plantation to his evil younger brother Anthony (John Glover), this bearded Prosper occupies himself, instead, studying magic with the African sorceress Ezeli (Donzaleigh Abernathy). Several lynchings later, he will have to use his Magus powers to save the life of Ezeli's uppity son Ariel (Harold Perrineau Jr.), after which, with his daughter Miranda (Katherine Heigl), they must flee into the Mississippi bayou, where they build a terrific tree house on territory confiscated from the brutish amphibian Gator Man (John Pyper-Ferguson). Twelve years later finds them in the middle of the Civil War. Having heard about the Emancipation Proclamation and Dred Scott, Ariel is getting restless—especially when he's a raven sent aloft by Prosper on aerial reconnaissance. And Miranda, having grown up nubile, is attracting the wrong sort of attention from Gator Man. And a wounded Union soldier (Eddie Mills) washes up at the tree house. And in his magic pool, Prosper sees the worst.

The right staff: Peter Fonda as Gideon Prosper in NBC's revision of the Bard.

Photograph by Gary Null/NBC.

When he wants to, Prosper can conjure phantom regiments. When he needs it, there's the sort of weather that discouraged dinosaurs. On cue, the bayou is a snake pit. I wish I could believe in Fonda in a rage, but he looks as if he'd really rather be keeping bees. I wish Heigl's Miranda had half the spunk of Abernathy's Ezeli, but she's more of a moon calf. Perrineau, so fine in *Oz,* gives us an Ariel of whom Bloom's African-Caribbean ideologues would probably approve. Can't they find a role for Glover in which he need not hyperventilate?

Maybe because the screenwriter is Jim Henerson (*Attica, The Rape of Richard Beck, The Fire Next Time*) and the director–executive producer is Jack Bender (*Northern Exposure, The Paper Chase*), this *Tempest* actually does have mildly interesting things to say about loyalty and freedom, about servitude and patriarchy, about reconciliation and even separation anxiety. It is also a wholly original explanation of the Battle of Vicksburg: General Ulysses S. Grant was lucky enough to have Shakespeare on his hirsute side (if not Caliban, who was probably busy down in Haiti wondering whether the French Revolution applied to black people).

TELEVISION

FANS OF ANNE PERRY—AND I AM RESOLUTELY iffy—have been waiting a long time for some visualization of her nineteenth-century mystery novels. Now, at last, with **The Cater Street Hangman** (Sunday, December 13; 9 to 11 P.M.; A&E), we have the first of what looks to be a promising string of two-hour TV movies based on her Inspector Pitt, under A&E's "Mysteries to Die For" umbrella.

Eoin McCarthy (*Tomorrow Never Dies*) stars as Pitt, the class-conscious copper, and Keeley Hawes (*The Moonstone*) as Charlotte Ellison, his upper-crust squeeze, whom he will meet here for the first time—while investigating the serial murders of young women alone on Charlotte's street at night after a visit to the vicarage—and whom he will subsequently marry, so as to have a spy among the resting classes. Eoin, with his chiseled Irish mug, is as sensitive as he is relentless. Keeley, with her steel specs and winsome bangs, is as nosy as she is delicious. Victorian England, circa 1881, is as gloomy and repressed as we have been led to believe by everybody from Jack the Ripper to Steven Marcus. "Where do you suspect the underworld is?" Pitt asks Charlotte, contemplating the stricken faces of impoverished children in the usual killer fog. In this altogether satisfactory inaugural installment, mention will also be made of atheism, abortion, "pernicious sermons," and many-limbed Kali, the Mother Goddess of overly erotic India. ■

John Leonard's 1997–98 reviews are available at **newyorkmag.com**.

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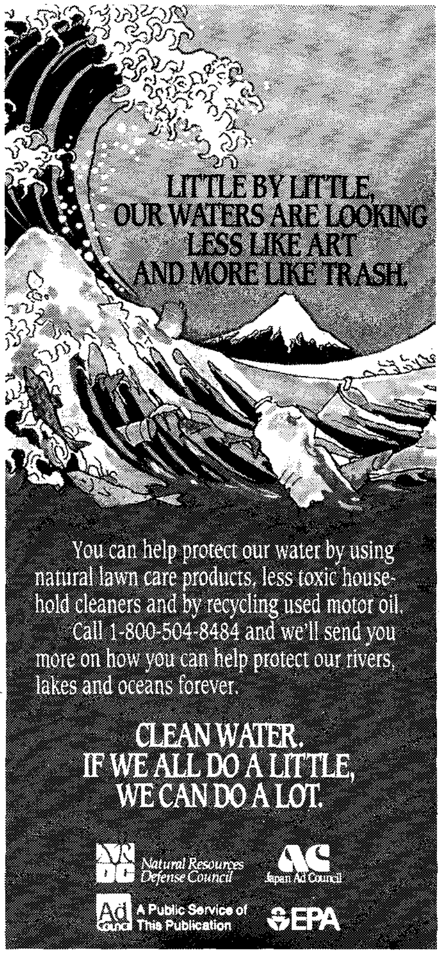
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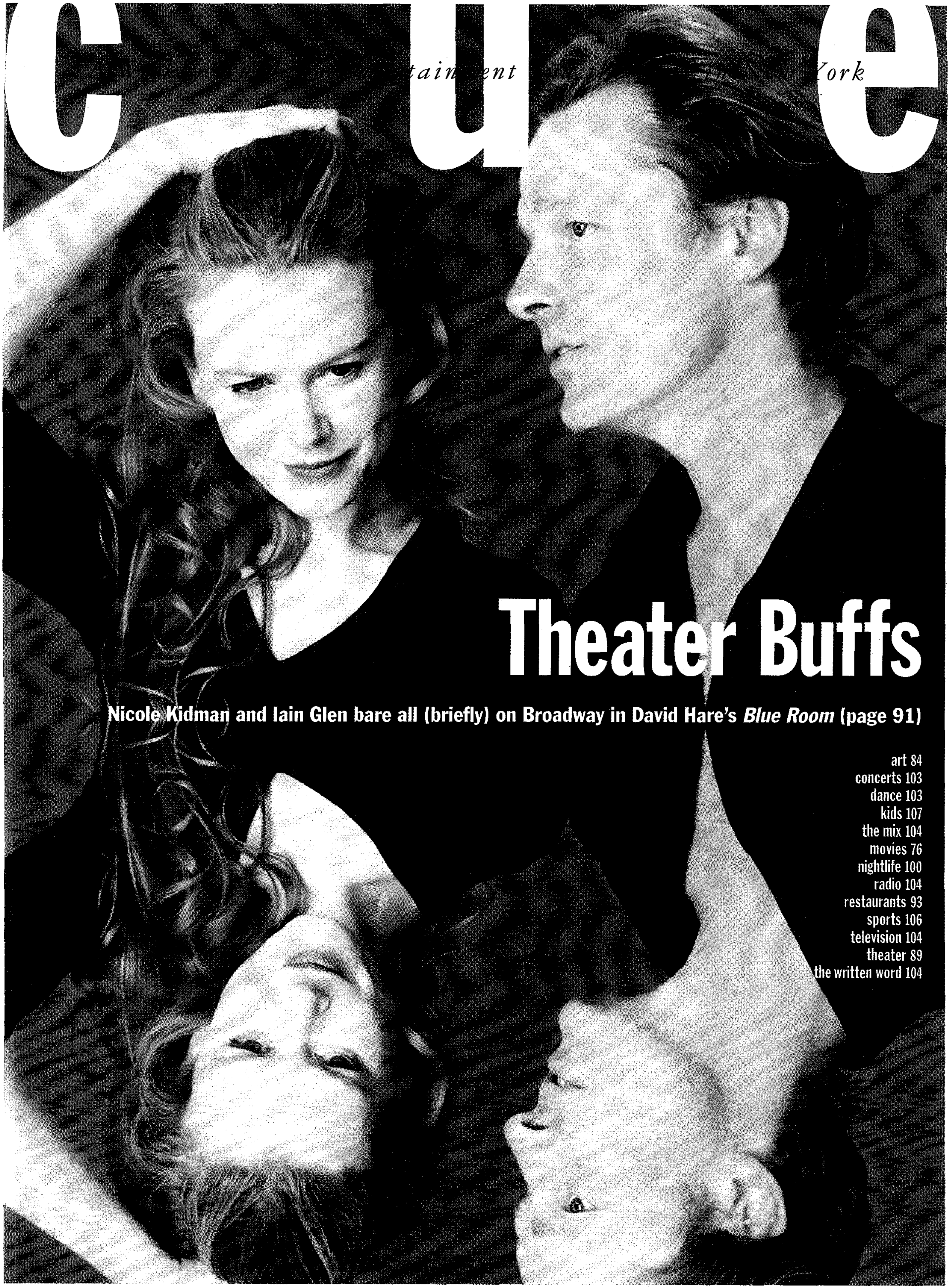

Theater Buffs

Nicole Kidman and Iain Glen bare all (briefly) on Broadway in David Hare's *Blue Room* (page 91)

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movies

Divorce Iranian Style...Rushmore...A Simple Plan

New Films

American History X—Edward Norton is a Neo-Nazi skinhead named Derek. The film's point is that this monster wasn't born that way: His firefighter father taught him to be racist. Derek becomes the youth leader of a Venice Beach white-power movement, and his younger brother, Danny (Edward Furlong), is also brought into the fold. Derek ends up jailed for three years and is transformed. Realizing that his Aryan brothers in the clink aren't exactly soulmates—they gang-rape him in the shower for being friendly around a black inmate (Guy Torry, in a superb cameo)—he emerges clear-eyed and with a full head of hair, yet. He returns home to salvage Danny before it's too late. The message seems to be: If you gang-rape a skinhead, he'll come to his senses. (Rainer; 11/9/98) (1 hr. 58 mins.; R) *Angelika Film Center; First & 62nd St. Cinema; Regency.*

★Antz—This animated feature, with its deadpan witticisms, its heart-stopping shifts of perspective, is completely entertaining, a kids' movie that will leave grown-ups quoting the best lines to one another. (Denby; 10/12/98) (1 hr. 23 mins.; PG) *Embassy 2–3; Crossbay II.*

Babe: Pig in the City—The sheep-pig travels to a state fair for a speaking engagement, in order to raise money to save the farm. With Magda Szubanski, James Cromwell, Mickey Rooney, and Mary Stein. (1 hr. 35 mins.; PG) *Village East; 19th Street East; Criterion Center; 86th Street; First & 62nd St. Cinema; 84th Street; New Coliseum; Bay Plaza; Concourse Plaza; Whitestone; Linden Boulevard Multiplex; Pavilion Theatre; The Movies at Sheepshead Bay; Crossbay II; Jackson Triplex; Main Street Cinemas; Movieworld; Plaza; The Movies at Staten Island.*

Belly—Childhood friends take very different paths as adults. Starring Nas and DMX. Directed by Hype Williams. (About 2 hrs.; R) *Criterion Center; Linden Boulevard Multiplex.*

★A Bug's Life—Disney's new computer-animated film is an iridescent marvel. It's also buggy with tie-ins, but that should not get in the way of our enjoyment of this wiseacre Aesop's fable. The ants on Ant Island have been terrorized by grasshoppers into harvesting food each fall as ritual offerings. When one of the ants, the perky Flik, accidentally spills the grasshoppers' bounty, the colony is endangered. Exiled, he seeks help from the bugs in a traveling flea circus. The troupe is more like a menagerie of knockabout vaudevillians. The bashful rhino bug takes his place beside Heimlich, the chubby green caterpillar who sounds like a cranky Katzenjammer Kid. Slim, the walking stick, is effetely studious; Francis, the ladybug, is no lady—he's a guy with a macho complex. Co-directors John Lasseter and Andrew Stanton position these bugs in ways that make witty use of the widescreen frame. One reason the bugs come across so well here is that the sheen of the wings and exoskeletons, and the segmented way in which these critters move, are tailor-made for the technical requirements of computer animation. But there's another explanation for why bugs are naturals in this family-entertainment universe: They bring out the kid in everybody. (Rainer; 12/7/98) (1 hr. 34 mins.; G) *Village East; Cinema I, II, Third Ave.; Guild 50th Street; Orpheum 7; Lincoln Square; Metro Cinema; Bay Plaza; Concourse Plaza; Whitestone; Linden Boulevard Multiplex; Pavilion Theatre; Ridgewood; The Movies at Sheepshead Bay; Centre Sunnyside; Cinemart; Crossbay II; Movieworld; Hylan Plaza; The Movies at Staten Island.*

Ground Rules:

These brief reviews, where noted, are condensed versions of reviews by Peter Rainer...A ★ denotes a current release that *New York* recommends, ranging from best-of-the-year picks to worthy curios to flawed movies with one outstanding element...Reviews are followed by the theaters where the film is playing.

The Celebration—A family reunites for its patriarch's 60th-birthday party and certain horrible secrets spill out over dinner. Directed by Thomas Vinterberg. (1 hr. 40 mins.; R) *Quad Cinema; Lincoln Plaza Cinemas; Brooklyn Academy of Music Rose Cinemas.*

Celebrity—Woody Allen doesn't physically appear here, but he seems to be inhabiting the corporeal substance of at least two of his stars. Kenneth Branagh is doing Allen at least as well as Allen's been doing himself lately. Judy Davis plays Branagh's bitter ex-wife, and she seems dubbed, too. When these two go at each other, we might as well be seeing double. Shot in austere black-and-white, the film has its sly amusements, but it's a minor entry in the canon. Branagh's Lee Simon is a hack magazine writer, and he has three celebrity-subject encounters that are meant to be illustrative. In the first, he accompanies a movie queen (Melanie Griffith) back to her childhood home, where he puts the make on her and she responds. Later, a supermodel (Charlize Theron) at a fashion show comes on to him and plays him for a gaga fool. Then he walks in on a hot movie star (Leonardo DiCaprio) as the brat tears up his hotel suite. It all comes across as so much slapstick sleaze. The only aspect that rings true in all this is that Lee wants to buy into the sleaze. Judy Davis's Robin is a schoolteacher involved with a guy (Joe Mantegna) and her story is instructive, too. Instead of being frazzled by the celebrity circus, she settles into its lunacy. She ends up an on-air host for a top-rated schlock TV interview show and can finally say of herself, "I've become the kind of woman I've always hated, but I'm happier." Which may be the most uplifting words anybody has spoken in a Woody Allen movie in a very long time. (Rainer; 11/30/98) (1 hr. 53 mins.; R) *Village East; 19th Street East; Astor Plaza; Coronet; Orpheum 7; Lincoln Square; Brooklyn Academy of Music Rose Cinemas; Pavilion Theatre; Main Street Cinemas.*

Central Station—A little boy loses his mother and depends on a bitter woman to take him home to Dad. Starring Fernanda Montenegro and Vinicius De Oliveira. Directed by Walter Salles. (1 hr. 55 mins.; R) *Angelika Film Center; Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.*

Photograph by Van Redin/Touchstone Pictures

Opening

The Undergraduate

If the buzz from the Toronto and New York Film Festivals is any indication, the zany new film by 'Bottle Rocket' duo Wes Anderson and Owen Wilson promises big, fresh comedy: In 'Rushmore,' a prep-school geek (Jason Schwartzman, above, son of actress Talia Shire) with a tremendous sense of superiority and entitlement falls way, way hard for his fetching British teacher (Olivia Williams)—only to discover there's an older, richer man (Bill Murray) standing in his way. Opens for one week (for Oscar consideration) on December 11.

'Cue' cover photograph by Mark Douet/Time Out/Camera Press/RETNA, Ltd., USA.

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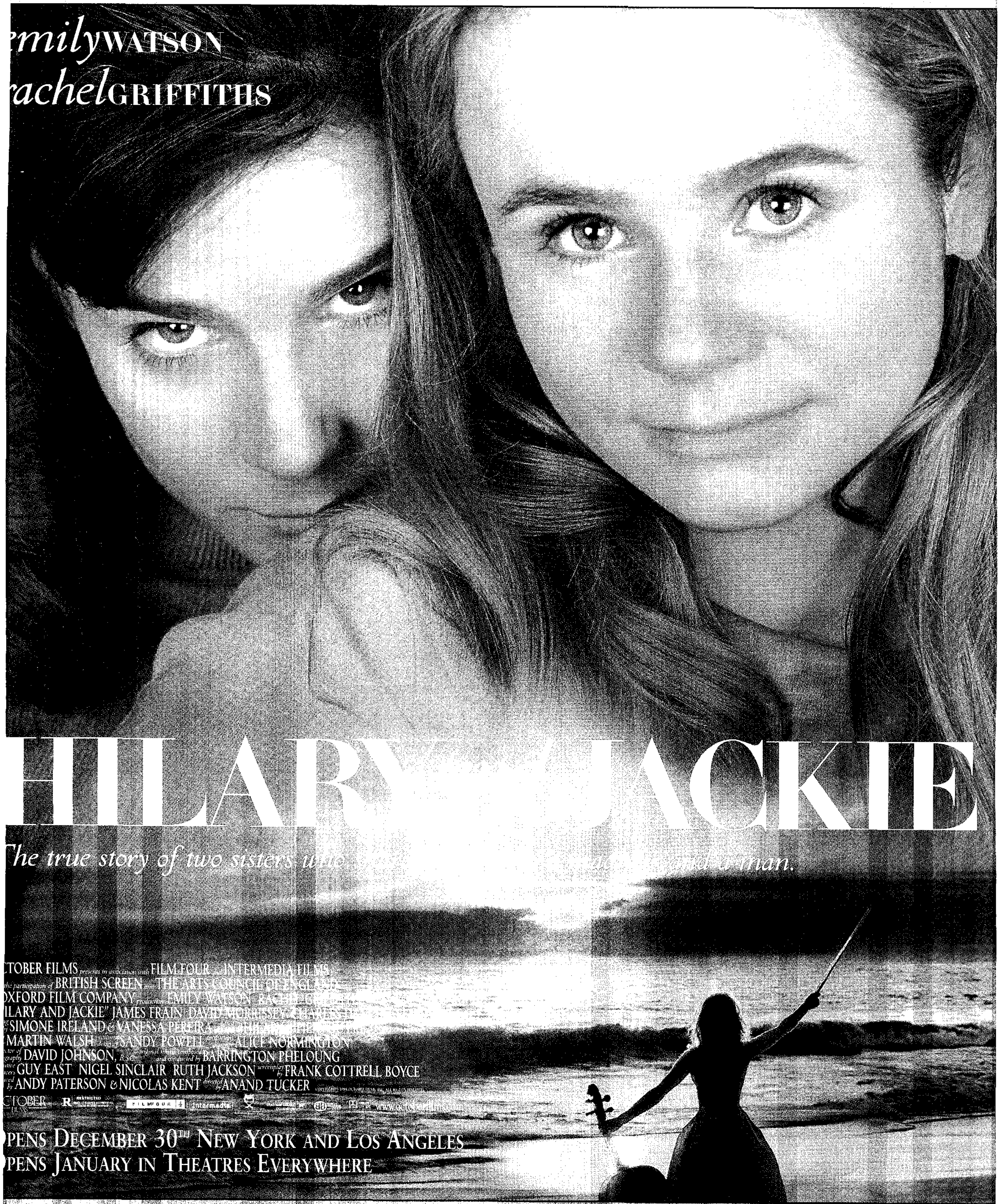
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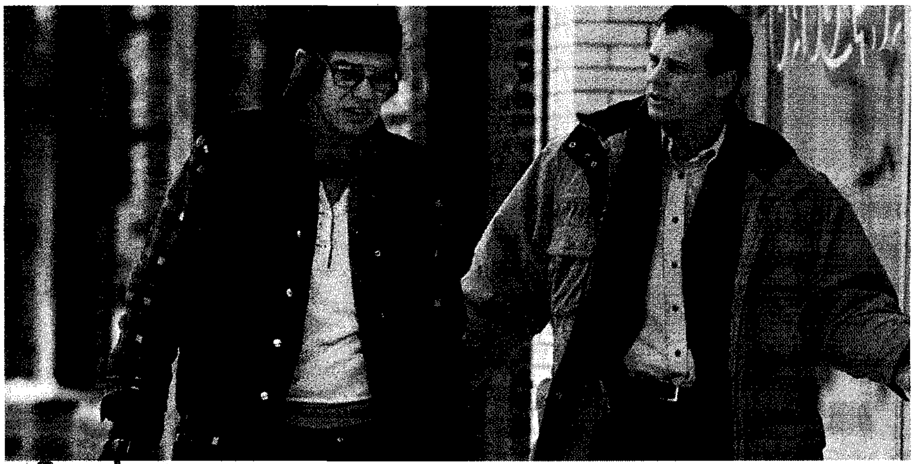

Opening Blood Money

In 'A Simple Plan,' small-town boy Billy Bob Thornton (left) and his straitlaced brother (Bill Paxton, right) face and fail a morality test when they find $4 million among the remains of a plane crash. Suddenly, their perfectly acceptable lives seem dismal in comparison with what the money could do to improve them, and a get-rich-quick plan turns tragic. Starts December 11.

Photograph by Melissa Moseley/Paramount Pictures.

The Cruise—Timothy "Speed" Levitch is a shambling, homeless, scraggly-haired motormouth who conducts his own free-form New York City Gray Line bus tours. In this documentary, we get a full dose of Levitch's nutty spritzes. He can be amusing—as when telling tourists that "the Fulton Fish Market is more an odor than a landmark." He can be helpful: He points out the neighborhood where Dylan Thomas expired. (The bard's last words: "I just had my sixteenth martini.") Miller certainly found a "character" to build a movie around, but there's something Diane Arbus-y in the whole enterprise. Levitch, about whom we learn very little, is a whirling dervish in pain, and the camera's steady, unblinking gaze does him no favors. He describes New York as "a scintillating, streamlined mermaid who sings to me at night." We don't hear the song. (Rainer; 11/2/98) (1 hr. 16 mins.; NR) *Angelika Film Center.*

Dancing at Lughnasa—Five sisters in rural thirties Ireland struggle with the harsh hand life has given them. Starring Meryl Streep, Sophie Thompson, Michael Gambon, Catherine McCormack, Kathy Burke, Brid Brennan, and Rhys Ifans. Directed by Pat O'Connor. From the stage play by Brian Friel. (2 hrs.; PG) *First & 62nd St. Cinema; Lincoln Plaza Cinemas; Brooklyn Academy of Music Rose Cinemas.*

Divorce Iranian Style—A look inside the Iranian divorce court, where women plead for their independence. Directed by Kim Longinotto and Ziba Mir-Hosseini. (1 hr. 20 mins.; NR) *Film Forum.*

Elizabeth—This film, about the daughter of King Henry VIII and Anne Boleyn, has real verve. It's not all that great even so, but in the historical-bio genre, liveliness counts for a lot. Cate Blanchett plays the young Elizabeth from the time she is nearly rendered headless by her half-sister Queen Mary (Kathy Burke) to her final ascension as the Virgin Queen. We are not to take that moniker literally. The Elizabeth on view here is a frolicker who knows how to dangle her spinsterhood before her panting suitors. She's a sexy queen, especially when she realizes she needs to ensure her power by lopping off a few heads of her own. The Indian director Shekhar Kapur and his screenwriter, Michael Hirst, would like us to see her as a feminist icon: She could do it all—dance the volta with her lover Robert Dudley (Joseph Fiennes) in full scandalous view of her court and lord it over the old fuds in Parliament. "I am no man's Elizabeth," she cries out while still in her marriageable mode. Later, she amends that: "I am married to England." Lucky England. (Rainer; 11/16/98) (2 hrs. 4 mins.; R) *Village Theatre VII; 19th Street East; New York Twin; Lincoln Square; Brooklyn Academy of Music Rose Cinemas; Pavilion Theatre.*

Enemy of the State—This film is set against the backdrop of top-secret government surveillance, and I suppose it's all meant to be Kafkaesque. But since this is a Jerry Bruckheimer production, it's more like Kafka on steroids. Gene Hackman (ostensibly Will Smith's co-star) doesn't even make it onto the wall until an hour into the show. He plays a kind of defrocked former CIA agent named Brill who knows all sorts of clever secret-agent-type things. Brill reluctantly surfaces to offer his aid when a Washington lawyer, Robert Clayton Dean (Smith), is targeted by rogue National Security Agency operatives under the command of Thomas Brian Reynolds (Jon Voight). Reynolds has already engineered the garroting of a senator (an unbilled Jason Robards) opposed to an over-the-top domestic snoop-and-spy bill. By accident, Dean finds himself in possession of a videotape of the murder, and runs for his life. If you're going to make a movie about how easy it is for our identities to be electronically stolen by the government, shouldn't you at least create people with identities worth stealing? The only character in the movie with any resonance is Brill, and that's largely because Hackman is playing him like a follow-up to his Harry Caul, the professional surveillance expert in *The Conversation.* (Rainer; 11/30/98) (2 hrs. 7 mins.; R) *Murray Hill Cinemas; Embassy 1; Embassy 2–3; Sutton; Orpheum 7; 84th Street; Bay Plaza; Concourse Plaza; Whitestone; Linden Boulevard Multiplex; Pavilion Theatre; Ridgewood; The Movies at Sheepshead Bay; Astoria; Centre Sunnyside; Cinemart; Crossbay; Main Street Cinemas; Hylan Plaza; The Movies at Staten Island.*

Gods and Monsters—The story of aging director James Whale (Ian McKellen) and his relationship with his lawn-boy, played by Brendan Fraser. With Lynn Redgrave. Written and directed by Bill Condon. Based on the novel *Father of Frankenstein.* (1 hr. 45 mins.; NR) *Quad Cinema; Eastside Playhouse; Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.*

Hallelujah—A documentary of the world tour of performance artist Ron Athey. Directed by Gund Saalfield. (1 hr. 30 mins.; NR) *Opens 12/11 at Cinema Village.*

Happiness—This scandalous American independent film, written and directed by Todd Solondz, is, of course, about misery. The characters try to make connections and wind up nowhere; they love the wrong person, the forbidden person; they degrade themselves, destroy other people. Each scene offers one or another aspect of the alleged anxiety and terror lurking beneath the respectable surface of middle-class life. A retired couple in their sixties (Ben Gazzara and Louise Lasser) have nothing left to say to one another. One of their daughters, Joy (Jane Adams), a scared, talentless girl, can't hold a job or a man. Her older sibling Helen, the slinky writer, is a parody of chic, attitudinizing success. The other sister, Trish, played by the gurgling Cynthia Stevenson, lives happily as an apple-pie-fascist mom, married to what seems to be a solid husband and dad—Bill (Dylan Baker). Bill lusts after little boys, perhaps even after his own little boy. Aren't the American suburbs a fairly easy target by now? Solondz subverts what has already been subverted. *Happiness* is a brilliant, disturbing, but unstable and half-crazy piece of work. (Denby; 10/19/98) (2 hrs. 17 mins.; NR) *Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.*

Hi Life—Eric Stoltz is an unemployed actor whose efforts to pay off a gambling debt turn into a series of complications at various bars in the city. With Katrin Carlidge, Charles Durning, Daryl Hannah, Moira Kelly, Peter Riegert, and Campbell Scott. (1 hr. 25 mins.; NR) *The Screening Room.*

Home Fries—Drew Barrymore is a fast-food worker who gets pregnant by her married boss but falls in love with his son. With Luke Wilson. (1 hr. 45 mins.; PG-13) *Criterion Center; Gemini; Orpheum 7; Lincoln Square; Bay Plaza; Whitestone; The Movies at Sheepshead Bay; Astoria; Centre Sunnyside; Crossbay II; The Movies at Staten Island.*

I Still Know What You Did Last Summer—The teen horror continues, but this time the girls are college freshmen, on spring break in the Bahamas. Starring Jennifer Love-Hewitt and Brandy. (1 hr. 45 mins.; R) *Criterion Center; Gemini; Orpheum 7; 84th Street; Bay Plaza; Concourse Plaza; Whitestone; Linden Boulevard Multiplex; Pavilion Theatre; The Movies at Sheepshead Bay; Astoria; Crossbay; Main Street Cinemas; Movieworld; The Movies at Bayside; The Movies at Staten Island.*

Jack Frost—Michael Keaton is an often-absent father whose death—and reincarnation as a snowman—brings him closer to his family. With Kelly Preston and Joseph Cross. (2 hrs.; PG) *Opens 12/11.*

The Last Emperor—The director's cut of Bernardo Bertolucci's 1987 epic about "Henry" Pu Yi, the last emperor of China. Winner of nine Academy Awards. Starring John Lone, Joan Chen, and Peter O'Toole. (3 hrs. 39 mins.; NR) *Film Forum.*

Life Is Beautiful—An Italian Jew and his son are taken to a concentration camp at the end of World War II, and the father attempts to hide the horror through fun and games. Starring Roberto Benigni, Sergio Bustric, Nicoletta Braschi, and Giorgio Cantarini. In Italian, with subtitles. (1 hr. 54 mins.; PG-13) *Angelika Film Center; Paris Theatre.*

Little Voice—A young girl who barely speaks but who can belt out impersonations of singing stars is persuaded to give a concert. Based on the play by Jim Cartwright. Starring Jane Horrocks, Brenda Blethyn, Michael Caine, and Ewan McGregor. Directed by Mark Herman. (1 hr. 39 mins.; R) *Crown Gotham.*

★**Living Out Loud**—Two lonely people—Holly Hunter's Judith and Danny DeVito's Pat—find each other and feel less alone. Writer-director Richard LaGravanese keeps things open and a little messy, just like life. At the beginning, Judith finds herself suddenly single after years as the wife of a prominent cardiologist (Martin Donovan) who has dropped her for a younger woman. Pat is the doorman in Judith's co-op. He's been turned out by his wife after 25 years. They get friendly, but because their emotions are so up-front, we never think of their involvement in class terms. Standard movie romances are fond of bringing mismatches together; writer-director LaGravanese shows us why they might be kept apart. Judith and Pat are made for each other, but they may not be right for each other, and therein lies the rub of this rueful duet. (Rainer; 11/9/98) (1 hr. 42 mins.; R) *Village East; Murray Hill Cinemas; Embassy 2–3; 72nd St. East; Lincoln Square; Cinemart.*

Lolita—This new version turns out to be a melancholy, rather touching account of a doomed love affair between a full-grown man and a very young woman. But that, of course, is not what Vladimir

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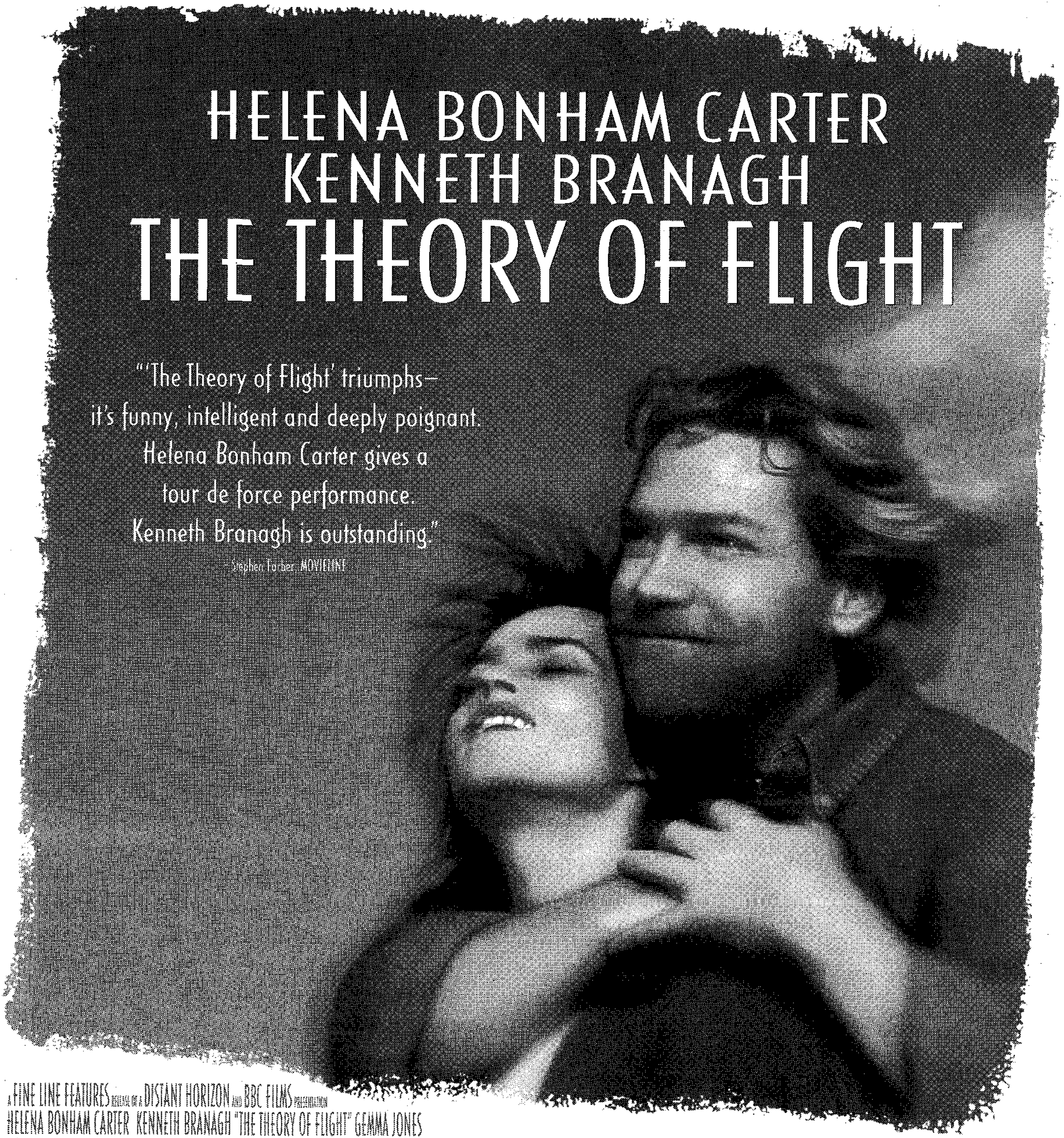

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Nabokov's masterpiece is about. Director Adrian Lyne and screenwriter Stephen Schiff, who did the adaptation, have seized on the romantic side of this amazing fable and left out most of the satire and malevolent humor. Humbert Humbert is no longer an ironic hero—a haughty and hypocritical creep who is redeemed—but a very earnest man who loves too much. The joke has vanished. (Denby; 10/12/98) (2 hrs. 17 mins.; R) *Brooklyn Academy of Music Rose Cinemas.*

Lonely In America—A young Indian man comes to America to choose his own wife and finds it's not as easy as it seems. Starring Ranjit Chowdhry. (1 hr. 45 mins.; NR) *Thalia Theatre.*

Meet Joe Black—Joe (Brad Pitt) is Death personified. He manifests himself in human form in order to mingle with mortals, but he doesn't look like he's having a lick of fun. Then again, this isn't a comedy. Actually, it is, but the joke is on the filmmakers. At the outset, media tycoon William Parrish (Anthony Hopkins) is visited by Joe Black as the tycoon nears his 65th birthday. It seems Joe is curious to take a look around before he brings Bill into the Great Beyond. "I chose you for your excellence and your ability to instruct," he tells Bill early on. But what it really looks like to us is that Death digs the good life—not just Bill's daughter (Claire Forlani), but his sumptuous New York penthouse and Versailles-style country estate. Parrish specializes in dispensing greeting-card-style wisdom, like counseling his marriageable daughter Susan (Claire Forlani) to hold out for the right guy: "I know it's a cornball thought, but love is passion, obsession. Forget yourself and listen to your heart." Forget the heart; is anybody listening to this dialogue? Meet Joe Black is like a Hallmark card with elephantiasis. (Rainer; 11/9/98) (2 hrs. 54 mins.; R) *Ziegfeld; Beekman; Lincoln Square; The Movies at Sheepshead Bay; The Movies at Bayside; The Movies at Staten Island.*

The Ogre—John Malkovich is an innocent German in World War II who is blind to the events around him and thus becomes a recruit for the Hitler Youth. With Armin Mueller-Stahl. Directed by Volker Schlondorff. (2 hrs.; NR) *Opens 12/11 at Quad Cinemas.*

Port Djema—A Parisian surgeon travels to East Africa to search for a missing child. Starring Jean-Yves Dubois. Directed by Eric Heumann. (1 hr. 33 mins.; NR) *Opens 12/11 at Cinema Village.*

Psycho—Director Gus Van Sant's carbon-copy remake of Hitchcock's 1960 classic. With Vince Vaughn, Anne Heche, Julianne Moore, William H. Macy, and Viggo Mortensen. (1 hr. 30 mins.; R) *Village Theatre VII; 19th Street East; State; First & 62nd St. Cinema; Orpheum 7; 84th Street; Metro Cinema; New Coliseum; Nova; Bay Plaza; Concourse Plaza; Whitestone; Canarsie; Kent Triplex; Linden Boulevard Multiplex; Marboro; Pavilion Theatre; Astoria; Centre Sunnyside; Crossbay II; Jackson Triplex; Main Street Cinemas; Movieworld; Plaza; Hylan Plaza; The Movies at Staten Island.*

Ringmaster—Two women catch their boyfriends cheating and drag them—and their lovers—to the Jerry Springer Show. Starring Molly Hagan, Wendy Raquel Robinson, and Jerry Springer. (1 hr. 35 mins.; R) *Criterion Center; Gemini; New Coliseum; Nova; Bay Plaza; Concourse Plaza; Whitestone; Canarsie; Kent Triplex; Linden Boulevard Multiplex; Marboro; Continental; Crossbay; Main Street Cinemas; The Movies at Staten Island.*

The Rug Rats Movie—A new baby joins the Pickles family and sibling rivalry ensues. Based on the animated television show. Directed by Norton Virgien and Igor Kovalyov. (1 hr. 45 mins.; G) *Village Theatre VII; 19th Street East; State; First & 62nd St. Cinema; UA East; Lincoln Square; New Coliseum; Nova; Olympia Theatre; Bay Plaza; Concourse Plaza; Whitestone; Canarsie; Kent Triplex; Linden Boulevard Multiplex; Marboro; Pavilion Theatre; Ridgewood; The Movies at Sheepshead Bay; Astoria; Centre Sunnyside; Cinemart; Crossbay II; Jackson Triplex; Main Street Cinemas; Movieworld; The Movies at Bayside; Hylan Plaza; The Movies at Staten Island.*

Shakespeare in Love—A young Shakespeare experiences writer's block until he meets a fair, spunky maiden who becomes his real-life Juliet. Starring Joseph Fiennes, Gwyneth Paltrow, Geoffrey Rush, Colin Firth, Ben Affleck, and Judi Dench. Written by Marc Norman and Tom Stoppard; directed by John Madden. (2 hrs.; R) *Opens 12/11.*

The Siege—This film starts out as a straightforward white-knuckler and ends up as a kind of paranoiac screed. In order to destroy what the FBI determines is an Arab terrorist threat in New York, the White House invokes martial law, and pretty soon upstanding Arab-Americans are being interned in detention camps and the Brooklyn Bridge is vibrating to the thwomp of Army combat boots. General William Devereaux (Bruce Willis) heads up the charge. It's all very p.c.: Denzel Washington's FBI terrorism-task-force chief, Anthony Hubbard, gets a Lebanese-American partner, Frank Haddad (Tony Shalhoub). We're also treated to an FBI-CIA face-off. Hub's nemesis, Elise Kraft (Annette Bening), is an undercover CIA operative who keeps interfering with his investigation. The paces these two are put through aren't on a much higher level than a standard TV cop series. An example of what can go wrong when talented people try to create a political thriller with ideas and still satisfy the box office. (Rainer; 11/16/98) (1 hr. 40 mins.; R) *Criterion Center; 86th Street; 62nd and Broadway; Olympia Theatre; Bay Plaza; Whitestone; Linden Boulevard Multiplex; The Movies at Sheepshead Bay; Astoria; Continental; Crossbay II; Movieworld; The Movies at Bayside; The Movies at Staten Island.*

Steam: The Turkish Bath—A man inherits a Turkish bath from his aunt and discovers who she was and falls for the custodian's handsome son. Starring Alessandro Gassman. Directed by Ferzan Opetek. (1 hr. 34 mins.; NR) *Quad Cinema.*

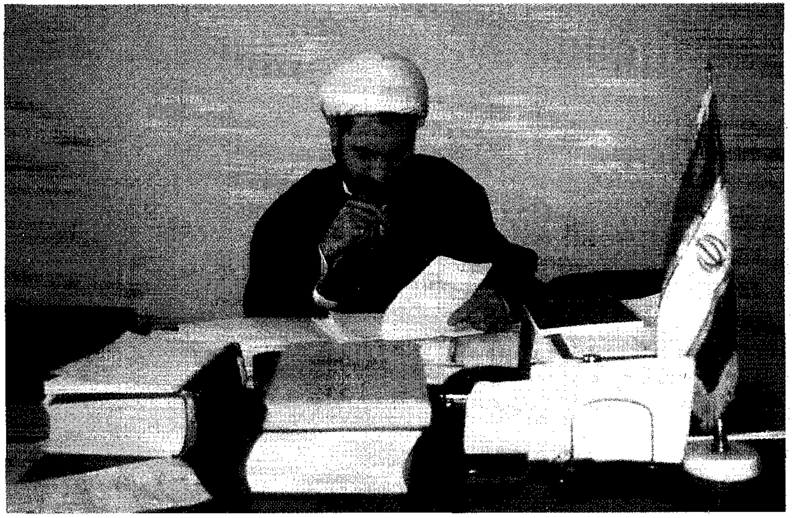
There's Something About Mary—Ted (Ben Stiller) pines for high-school crush Mary (Cameron Diaz), so he sends a sleazy investigator, Healy (Matt Dillon), to spy on her. And of course Healy falls in love with her, too. The trouble with the Farrelly brothers is that in order to get a laugh, they dump on everybody and everything. It is the value of shock, of breaking taboos, of liberating secret fears. If you don't laugh at a man on crutches, or at a psycho-

Documentary

Breaking Up Is Hard to Do

"Iranian girls are brought up to see marriage as the ultimate goal," says writer and anthropologist Ziba Mir-Hosseini. "It's something they look forward to." Iranian marriage looks like a good deal on paper—until you see *Divorce Iranian Style* (opening Wednesday at Film Forum) and find out how hard it can be to leave an unhappy union. When an Iranian woman agrees to marry, she enters into a contract with her husband-to-be. "Many families use this as an engagement period," says Mir-Hosseini, who is married to an Englishman. Most times, if the affianced don't get along, the contract is canceled before the ceremony—usually set for the next year—takes place. It's an Islamic prenuptial agreement of sorts, in which the woman may add stipulations like what town she wants to live in, or options like divorce. But that's just theoretically. For the documentary, directors Kim Longinotto and Mir-Hosseini visited a Tehran divorce court and filmed women as they told tales of husbands who refuse to let them go. Their accounts are at points funny, heartbreaking, and infuriating. "In practice, women have a lot of rights," says Mir-Hosseini. "They are in fact the dominant partner in marriage—they run the household, they make the major decisions. But in the cases that come to the courts, there is usually a power struggle. And then the husband uses his legal rights." Men can refuse divorce, and under Iran's interpretation of Islamic law, a divorced mother can lose custody of her sons to her ex-husband at age 2; her daughters, at age 7. Things are not as bleak as they once were, assures Mir-Hosseini. "In a very paradoxical way," she says, "the revolution has empowered women." The compulsory protective *hijab*, or head scarf, actually makes public places "safe," enabling women from very conservative families to get an education. As a result, Mir-Hosseini says, the literacy rate among women—once a measly 27 percent—is now around 77 percent. And this year, more than half of Iranians accepted into college were women. The terms of the revolution, it seems, have been a wake-up call. "Women lost something," says Mir-Hosseini. "They lost something, and now they are fighting to get it back."

PATRICIA FALVO



Photograph by Jamshid Bairami.

pathic hitchhiker, or at an old woman's withered breasts, then you stand accused of a craven obeisance to political correctness. The insensitivity gets one down after a while. (Denby; 8/3/98) (1 hr. 59 mins.; R) *Criterion Center.*

★**Touch of Evil**—Orson Welles's great 1958 thriller, which stars Welles, Charlton Heston, Janet Leigh, and Joseph Calleia, is one of the most intellectually and emotionally demanding movies ever made in Hollywood. It's tough to sit through; it's a jammed, discordant, discomforting experience—a nightmare, in fact, but a nightmare that leaves in the wake of its many complications a moral significance of disturbing perversity and brilliance. Take a deep breath and enjoy it. (Denby; 9/21/98) (1 hr. 48 mins.; NR) *Film Forum.*

Velvet Goldmine—Brian Slade (Jonathan Rhys Meyers) is a glamster who gets his first glimpse of glamdom Nirvana when he witnesses a concert by the Iggy Pop–ish American singer Curt Wild (Ewan McGregor) as he prances naked and dives through hoops of fire. Pretty soon Brian is a superstar himself, and Curt is on the junkie skids. Then Brian self-destructs, staging his own mock assassination during a concert and incurring the everlasting wrath of his fans when the hoax is revealed. He drops permanently from sight. None of this is as linear as it sounds, and since everyone in the movie has the approximate human weight of a hologram, we're not really motivated to fit together the puzzle pieces of their lives. Hollow is as hollow does. *Velvet Goldmine* should be more startling than it is. (Rainer; 11/16/98) (1 hr. 57 mins.; R) *Village Theatre VII.*

Very Bad Things—A bachelor weekend goes bad when the stripper is accidentally killed and a series of fatalities follow. Starring Christian Slater, Jeremy Piven, Cameron Diaz, Jon Favreau, Leland Orser, Daniel Stern, and Jeanne Tripplehorn. Written and directed by Peter Berg. (1 hr. 40 mins.; R) *Murray Hill Cinemas; State; First & 62nd St. Cinema; Lincoln Square; Bay Plaza; Whitestone; Linden Boulevard Multiplex; The Movies at Sheepshead Bay; The Movies at Staten Island.*

★**Waking Ned Devine**—Compared with all the IRA-themed movies we've been seeing lately, this swatch of stage-Irishness is a walk in the park. Two lifelong mates from Tully More—population 52—figure out that one of their neighbors has won the lottery. David Kelly and Ian Bannen are the dynamic duo who connive to get close to the money. Bannen and he have such an easygoing rapport that you can almost forgive the fact that this film seems to have been produced strictly for the tourist trade. It would make the perfect in-flight movie on AerLingus. (Rainer; 12/4/98) (1 hr. 31 mins.; PG) *Angelika Film Center; Cinema I, II, Third Ave.; Lincoln Square.*

The Waterboy—Adam Sandler is an accidental football star. With Kathy Bates. (2 hrs.; PG-13) *Village Theatre VII; Murray Hill Cinemas; Cinema I, II, Third Ave.; State; Orpheum 7; 84th Street; Bay Plaza; Concourse Plaza; Whitestone; Linden Boulevard Multiplex; Marboro; Pavilion Theatre; Ridgewood; Centre Sunnyside; Cinemart; Crossbay II; Main Street Cinemas; Movieworld; Hylan Plaza; The Movies at Staten Island.*

Manhattan

Below 14th Street

Angelika Film Center—18 W. Houston St. (995-2000) *American History X; Central Station; The Cruise; Life Is Beautiful; Waking Ned Devine.*

Art Greenwich Twin—Greenwich Ave. at 12th St. (505-CINE#616) *Call theater for showtimes.*

Cinema Village 12th St.—22 E. 12th St. (924-3363) *Closed for renovations.*

Film Forum—209 W. Houston St. (727-8110) *Divorce Iranian Style; The Last Emperor; Touch of Evil.*

Quad Cinema—34 W. 13th St. (255-8800) *The Celebration; Gods and Monsters; Steam: The Turkish Bath.*

The Screening Room—54 Varick St. (below Canal) (334-2100) *Hi Life.* (See also "Museums, Societies, Etc.")

Union Square—13th St. and Broadway (253-2225) *Dancing at Lughnasa; Enemy of the State; Home Fries; I Still Know What You Did Last Summer; Little Voice;*

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Solutions to last week's puzzles

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Meet Joe Black; Ringmaster; Saving Private Ryan; Very Bad Things.

Village East—189 Second Ave., at 12th St. (529-6799) *Babe: Pig in the City; A Bug's Life; Bulworth; Celebrity; Living Out Loud.*

Village Theatre VII—66 Third Ave., at 11th St. (982-0400) *Elizabeth; Pleasantville; Psycho; The Rug Rats Movie; Velvet Goldmine; The Waterboy.*

Waverly—323 Sixth Ave., at W. 3rd St. (505-CINE#603) *Call theater for showtimes.*

14th–41st Streets

19th Street East—890 Broadway, at 19th St. (260-8000) *Babe: Pig in the City; Celebrity; Elizabeth; Psycho; The Rug Rats Movie.*

34th Street Showplace—238 E. 34th St. (532-5544) *Call theater for showtimes.*

Chelsea—260 W. 23rd St. (505-CINE#597) *Call theater for showtimes.*

Chelsea West—333 W. 23rd St. (505-CINE#614) *Call theater for showtimes.*

Murray Hill Cinemas—160 E. 34th St. (689-6548) *Enemy of the State; Living Out Loud; Very Bad Things; The Waterboy.*

42nd–60th Streets

59th Street East—239 E. 59th St. (505-CINE#615) *Beloved.*

Astor Plaza—44th St. bet. Broadway and Eighth Ave. (869-8340) *Celebrity.*

Cinema I, II, Third Ave.—1001 Third Ave., at 60th St. (753-6022) *A Bug's Life; Waking Ned Devine; The Waterboy.*

Coronet—993 Third Ave., bet. 59th and 60th Sts. (505-CINE#608) *Celebrity.*

Criterion Center—1514 Broadway, bet. 44th and 45th Sts. (354-0900) *Babe: Pig in the City; Belly; Home Fries; I Still Know What You Did Last Summer; Ringmaster; The Siege; There's Something About Mary.*

Crown Gotham—969 Third Ave., bet. 57th and 58th Sts. (759-2262) *Little Voice.*

Eastside Playhouse—919 Third Ave., bet. 55th and 56th Sts. (755-3020) *Gods and Monsters.*

Embassy 1—1560 Broadway, bet. 46th and 47th Sts. (302-0494) *Enemy of the State.*

Embassy 2-3—701 Seventh Ave., bet. 47th and 48th Sts. (730-7262) *Antz; Enemy of the State; Living Out Loud.*

Guild 50th Street—33 W. 50th St. (757-2406) *A Bug's Life.*

Paris Theatre—4 W. 58th St. (688-3800) *Life Is Beautiful.*

State—1540 Broadway, bet. 45th and 46th Sts. (391-2900) *Psycho; The Rug Rats Movie; Very Bad Things; The Waterboy.*

Sutton—205 E. 57th St. (759-1411) *Enemy of the State.*

Worldwide Cinemas—340 W. 50th St. (505-CINE#610) *Blade; Bride of Chucky; A Night at the Roxbury; Ronin; Snake Eyes; Soldier.*

Ziegfeld—141 W. 54th St. (505-CINE#602) *Meet Joe Black.*

61st Street and Above, East Side

72nd St. East—1230 Third Ave., bet. 71st and 72nd Sts. (879-1313) *Living Out Loud.*

86th Street—125 E. 86th St. (505-CINE#604) *Babe: Pig in the City; The Siege.*

86th Street East—210 E. 86th St. (249-1144) *Closed for renovations.*

Beekman—1254 Second Ave., bet. 65th and 66th Sts. (505-CINE#606) *Meet Joe Black.*

First & 62nd St. Cinema—400 E. 62nd St. (505-CINE#957) *American History X; Babe: Pig in the City; Dancing at Lughnasa; Psycho; The Rug Rats Movie; Very Bad Things.*

Gemini—1210 Second Ave., at 64th St. (832-1670) *Home Fries; I Still Know What You Did Last Summer; Ringmaster.*

New York Twin—1271 Second Ave., bet. 66th and 67th Sts. (744-7339) *Elizabeth.*

Orpheum 7—1538 Third Ave., at 86th St. (828-9738) *A Bug's Life; Celebrity; Enemy of the State; Home Fries; I Still Know What You Did Last Summer; Psycho; The Waterboy.*

UA East—1629 First Ave., at 85th St. (249-5100) *The Rug Rats Movie.*

61st Street and Above, West Side

62nd and Broadway—1871 Broadway, at 62nd St. (505-CINE#864) *The Siege.*

84th Street—2310 Broadway, at 84th St. (877-3600) *Babe: Pig in the City; Enemy of the State; I Still Know What You Did Last Summer; Psycho; The Waterboy.*

Lincoln Plaza Cinemas—30 Lincoln Plaza, on Broadway bet. 62nd and 63rd Sts. (757-2280) *The Celebration; Central Station; Dancing at Lughnasa; Gods and Monsters; Happiness.*

Lincoln Square—1998 Broadway, at 68th St. (336-5000) *A Bug's Life; Celebrity; Elizabeth; Home Fries; Living Out Loud; Meet Joe Black; Pleasantville; The Rug Rats Movie; Very Bad Things; Waking Ned Devine.*

Metro Cinema—2626 Broadway, bet. 99th and 100th Sts. (505-CINE#609) *A Bug's Life; Psycho.*

New Coliseum—701 W. 181st St. (740-1545) *Babe: Pig in the City; Psycho; Ringmaster; The Rug Rats Movie.*

Nova—3589 Broadway, bet. 147th and 148th Sts. (862-5728) *Psycho; Ringmaster; The Rug Rats Movie.*

Olympia Theatre—2770 Broadway, bet. 106th and 107th Sts. (505-CINE#613) *The Rug Rats Movie; The Siege.*

Regency—1987 Broadway, bet. 67th and 68th Sts. (505-CINE#585) *American History X.*

Thalia Theater—250 W. 95th St. (864-7700) *Lonely In America.*

Bronx

Area Code 718

Bay Plaza—2210 Bartow Ave., behind Bay Plaza Mall (320-3020) *Babe: Pig in the City; A Bug's Life; Enemy of the State; Home Fries; I Still Know What You Did Last Summer; Psycho; Ringmaster; The Rug Rats Movie; The Siege; Very Bad Things; The Waterboy.*

Concourse Plaza—214 E. 161st St. (588-8800) *Babe: Pig in the City; A Bug's Life; Enemy of the State; I Still Know What You Did Last Summer; Psycho; Ringmaster; The Rug Rats Movie; The Waterboy.*

Whitestone—2505 Bruckner Blvd., at Hutchinson River Pkwy. (409-9037) *Babe: Pig in the City; A Bug's Life; Enemy of the State; Home Fries; I Still Know What You Did Last Summer; Psycho; Ringmaster; The Rug Rats Movie; The Siege; Very Bad Things; The Waterboy.*

Opening

A Bard and His Babe

In *Shakespeare in Love,* West Village princess Gwyneth Paltrow steps back in time to woo a young William Shakespeare (Joseph Fiennes) with her beauty, wit, and heaving bosom and, in the process, helps him write *Romeo and Juliet* (perhaps you've heard of it . . .). Starts Friday.

Brooklyn

Area Code 718

Alpine—6817 Fifth Ave., at 69th St. (777-FILM#580) *Call theater for showtimes.*

Brooklyn Academy of Music Rose Cinemas—200 Eastern Pkwy., Brooklyn (718-638-5000) *The Celebration; Celebrity; Dancing at Lughnasa; Elizabeth; Lolita.*

Brooklyn Heights—70 Henry St. (596-7070) *Call theater for showtimes.*

Canarsie—9310 Ave. L, at E. 93rd St. (251-0700) *Psycho; Ringmaster; The Rug Rats Movie.*

Cobble Hill—265 Court St. (596-9113) *Call theatre for showtimes..*

Fortway—6720 Ft. Hamilton Pkwy., at 68th St. (777-FILM#578) *Call theater for showtimes.*

Kenmore—Church Ave. nr. Flatbush Ave. (777-FILM#576) *Call theater for showtimes.*

Kent Triplex—Coney Island Ave. at Ave. H (338-3371) *Psycho; Ringmaster; The Rug Rats Movie.*

Kings Plaza—5201 Kings Plaza; Flatbush Ave. at Ave. U (777-FILM#579) *Call theater for showtimes.*

Kingsway—946 Kings Hwy. at Coney Island Ave. (777-FILM#577) *Call theater for showtimes.*

Linden Boulevard Multiplex—Linden Blvd. and Eldert Lane (277-0303) *Babe: Pig in the City; Belly; A Bug's Life; Enemy of the State; I Still Know What You Did Last Summer; Psycho; Ringmaster; The Rug Rats Movie; The Siege; Very Bad Things; The Waterboy.*

Marboro—6817 Bay Pkwy., at 69th St. (232-4000) *Psycho; Ringmaster; The Rug Rats Movie; The Waterboy.*

Pavilion Theatre—188 Prospect Park West (369-0838) *Babe: Pig in the City; A Bug's Life; Celebrity; Elizabeth; Enemy of the State; I Still Know What You Did Last Summer; Psycho; The Rug Rats Movie; The Waterboy.*

Ridgewood—55-27 Myrtle Ave., at Putnam Ave. (821-5993) *A Bug's Life; Enemy of the State; The Rug Rats Movie; The Waterboy.*

The Movies at Sheepshead Bay—3907 Shore Pkwy, off Exit 9 at Belt Pkwy. (615-1700) *Babe: Pig in the City; A Bug's Life; Enemy of the State; Home Fries; I Still Know What You Did Last Summer; Meet Joe Black; The Rug Rats Movie; The Siege; Very Bad Things.*

Photograph by Laurie Sparham/Miramax Films.

Queens

Area Code 718

Astoria—28-60 Steinway St. (726-1279) *Enemy of the State; Home Fries; I Still Know What You Did Last Summer; Psycho; The Rug Rats Movie; The Siege.*

Bay Terrace—211-01 26th Ave. and Bell Blvd., Bayside (428-4040) *Call theater for showtimes.*

Centre Sunnyside—42-17 Queens Blvd. (361-6869) *A Bug's Life; Enemy of the State; Home Fries; Psycho; The Rug Rats Movie; The Waterboy.*

Cinema City—183-15 Horace Harding Expy., at 183rd St., Fresh Meadows (777-FILM#592) *Call theater for showtimes.*

Cinemart—106-03 Metropolitan Ave., at 72nd Rd., Forest Hills (261-2244) *A Bug's Life; Enemy of the State; Living Out Loud; The Rug Rats Movie; The Waterboy.*

Continental—70-20 Austin St., Forest Hills (544-1020) *Pleasantville; Ringmaster; The Siege.*

Crossbay—94-11 Rockaway Blvd., at Woodhaven Blvd., Ozone Park (848-1738) *Enemy of the State; I Still Know What You Did Last Summer; Ringmaster.*

Crossbay II—92-10 Rockaway Blvd., at 93rd St., Ozone Park (641-5330) *Antz; Babe: Pig in the City; A Bug's Life; Home Fries; Psycho; The Rug Rats Movie; The Siege; The Waterboy.*

Elmwood—57-02 Hoffman Dr., Elmhurst (429-4770) *Call theater for showtimes.*

Fresh Meadows—Eastbound Service Rd. at 190th St. (777-FILM#619) *Call theater for showtimes.*

Jackson Triplex—82nd St. at Roosevelt Ave. (478-6777) *Babe: Pig in the City; Psycho; The Rug Rats Movie.*

Main Street Cinemas—72-66 Main St. (263-4828) *Babe: Pig in the City; Celebrity; Enemy of the State; I Still Know What You Did Last Summer; Psycho; Ringmaster; The Rug Rats Movie; The Waterboy.*

Midway—108-22 Queens Blvd., at 71st Ave., Forest Hills (261-8572) *American History X; Babe: Pig in the City; Celebrity; Elizabeth; Home Fries; Life Is Beautiful; Meet Joe Black; Psycho; Very Bad Things.*

Movieworld—242-02 61st Ave., off Exit 31, Douglaston (423-7200) *Babe: Pig in the City; A Bug's Life; I Still Know What You Did Last Summer; Psycho; The Rug Rats Movie; The Siege; The Waterboy.*

North Shore Towers—27-10 Grand Central Pkwy., Floral Park (229-7702) *The Celebration; Living Out Loud; Pleasantville.*

Plaza—103-14 Roosevelt Ave., at 103rd St., Corona (639-0012) *Babe: Pig in the City; Psycho.*

The Movies at Bayside—38-39 Bell Blvd., at 39th Ave. (225-7711) *I Still Know What You Did Last Summer; Meet Joe Black; The Rug Rats Movie; The Siege.*

Trylon—98-81 Queens Blvd., at 66th Ave., Rego Park (459-8944) *Call theater for showtimes.*

Staten Island

Area Code 718

Atrium—680 Arthur Kill Rd., nr. Richmond Ave., Eltingville (317-8300) *Babe: Pig in the City; A Bug's Life; Enemy of the State; Home Fries; I Still Know What You Did Last Summer; I'll Be Home For Christmas; Psycho; The Rug Rats Movie; Very Bad Things; The Waterboy; The Wizard of Oz.*

Hylan Plaza—107 Mill Rd., at Hylan Blvd., New Dorp (351-0805) *A Bug's Life; Enemy of the State; Psycho; The Rug Rats Movie; The Waterboy.*

The Movies at Staten Island—141 E. Service Rd., at Victory Blvd., Travis (983-9600) *Babe: Pig in the City; A Bug's Life; Enemy of the State; Home Fries; I Still Know What You Did Last Summer; Meet Joe Black; Psycho; Ringmaster; The Rug Rats Movie; The Siege; Very Bad Things; The Waterboy.*

Museums, Societies, Etc.

American Museum of Natural History—"Healing: Cultural Perspectives." 12/12–12/13: Methods and issues of healing in diverse cultures explored through film. Central Park West at 79th St. (769-5305). $7 members; $8 nonmembers.

American Museum of the Moving Image—"The Power of Glamour." Through 1/3: Films starring eleven actresses put under contract by their studios to be built into glamour queens. 12/12: *Morocco* (1930) and *Shanghai Express* (1932). 12/13: *One Way Passage* (1932). AMMI: 36-01 35th Ave., Astoria, Queens (718-784-4520). Tickets, $4.50–$8.50. Members and children under 4, free.

Anthology Film Archives—"Premiere." Through 12/13: *My Knees Were Jumping* (1996). "New Filmmakers Series." 12/9: Shorts and *A Carburetor of Suzy* (1998). "Revealing Russia." 12/10–12/13: Films by Marina Goldovskaya. "Learning From John Cassavetes." 12/11–12/12: *Killing of a Chinese Bookie* (1976) and *Husbands* (1970). 12/12–13: *Minnie and Moskowitz* (1978). 12/13: *A Child Is Waiting* (1963) and *Gloria* (1980). "Adolfas Mekas." 12/14–12/31: *Hallelujah the Hills* (1963). "Czech Center Presents." 12/10: *The Christ Years* (1967). 32 Second Ave., at 2nd St. (505-5110); $7.

Brooklyn Museum of Art—"Master Filmmakers of Iran." Through 1/24/99. 12/13: *Nargess* (1992). 12/20: *Still Life* (1974). 200 Eastern Pkwy., Brooklyn (718-638-5000, ext. 230); $6; $4 members, students, and senior citizens.

A Different Light—12/13: *Portrait in Black* (1960). 7 P.M. 151 W. 19th St. (989-4850); free.

Donnell Media Center—"All Hands On Deck: Cinema of the Sea." 12/9: *The Seas Beneath* (1931). 12/16: *Titanic* (1997). "Commemorating CBS News." 12/10: *The Search for Ulysses* (1966) and *Gaugin in Tahiti: The Search for Paradise* (1967). 20 W. 53rd St. (621-0619); free.

Film Society of Lincoln Center (The Walter Reade Theater)—"Spanish Cinema Now." Through 12/31: Thirteen new Spanish films and a ten-film Manuel Gutiérrez Aragón retrospective. "Independents Night." 12/9: *Who's the Caboose?* (1997). "Special Event." 12/10: Flamenco on film: *Carmen Forever* (1952) and *Spirit & Mystery of Flamenco* (1952). "Dance on Camera '98." 12/12–12/13: Eighty-one dance films from around the world. Call 875-5600 for info. 65 W. 65th St., plaza level (875-5600); regular screenings $8.50–$15.

French Institute—"Catherine Deneuve: A Retrospective." 12/8: *Les Voleurs* (1996). 12/15: *Le Bon Plaisir* (1984). Florence Gould Hall, 55 E. 59th St. (355-6160); $7.

Guggenheim Museum—"French Cinema, 1958–1998." 12/9: *The Samurai* (1967). 12/11: *India Song* (1975), *Vagabond* (1985), and *Je, tu, il, elle* (1974). Peter B. Lewis Theater, 1071 Fifth Ave., at 89th St. (423-3587). Tickets free with admission.

Japan Society—"Anime: The History of Japanese Animated Films." 12/11–2/26/99: A comprehensive look at the genre, from the 1940s to the present. 333 E. 47th St. (752-3015); $5 members, $8 nonmembers, students, and senior citizens.

Museum of Jewish Heritage—12/9: *Because of That War* (1988). In Hebrew with English subtitles. Florence Gould Hall, French Institute, 55 E. 59th St. (355-6160). Free.

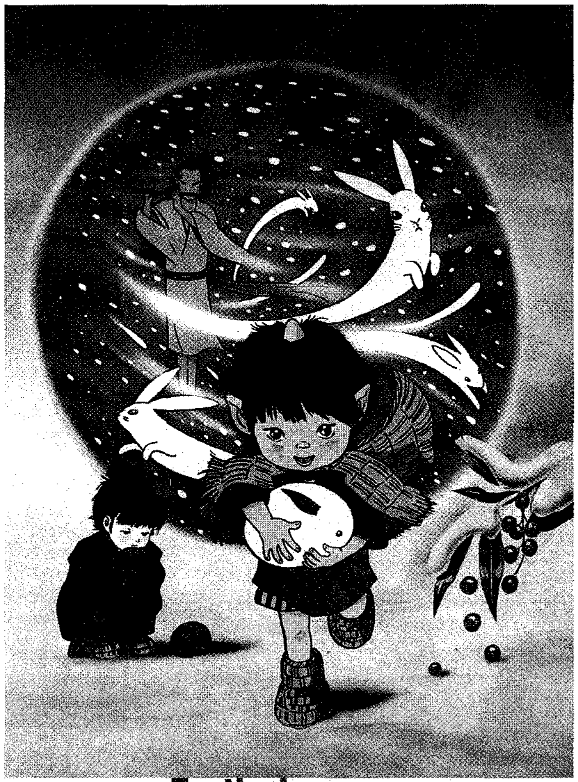
Museum of Modern Art—"Cinema Novo and Beyond." Through 1/22/99: Forty years of Brazilian films, totaling 59 features and 16 shorts. "René Clair in France." 12/11: *The Last Millionaire* (1934). 12/12: *The Grand Maneuver* (1955). 12/13: *Silence Is Golden / Man About Town* (1947) and *Quatorze Juillet* (1932). "New Documentaries." 12/10–11: *Out of Sight Out of Mind* (1995). "Big As Life." 12/10: Various shorts. "Cineprobe." 12/14: Films by Jeff Scher. "Special Screening." 12/15: *Neapolitan Carousel* (1954). 11 W. 53rd St. (708-9400); free with $9.50 admission.

Ocularis—12/13: *A Winter's Tale* (1986). 70 N. 6th St., Williamsburg, Brooklyn. $5. Call 718-388-8713 for info.

The Screening Room—Friday and Saturday at midnight: *Unmade Beds* (1998). Sunday brunch: *Breakfast at Tiffany's* (1961). Call theater for info. 54 Varick St. (334-2100); $8 ($5 for Sunday brunch patrons).

Voices & Visions: New Films From Belgium—Through 12/10: Ten recent Belgian films. Call the festival hotline (591-1135) for more info. Tickets $8, $6 students, $5 senior citizens. At Quad Cinemas, 34 W. 13th St. (255-8800).

YWCA Cine-Club—"A Celebration of Japanese Cinema." 12/12–13: *Quiet Duel* (1949). 610 Lexington Ave., at 53rd St. (735-9717); $6 members, $7 nonmembers.



Festival
Anti-Mickey

Until now, America's exposure to Japanese animated films has been limited to sci-fi stories like Osamu Tezuka's 'Astro Boy,' from 1963. But as the Japan Society shows us in "Anime: The History of Japanese Animated Films," there is much more to this increasingly adult-oriented cinema than space cruisers and robots. The comprehensive look at the genre includes 'The Goblin and the Snow Hare' (above) and the 1997 box-office hit 'Princess Mononoke' (soon to be released here by Disney or, if the story line proves too adult for a G rating, Miramax). Starts December 11; through February 26. See "Museums, Societies, Etc." for more info.

Photograph by Kyowa Kyoiku Eiga-sha.

art

Campana/Ingo Maurer...Richard Tipping

Galleries

Solos

Madison Avenue and Vicinity

András Böröcz—Figurative sculptures carved from pencils, erasers, and solid blocks of graphite; through 1/16/99. Baumgold, 128 E. 72nd St. (861-7338).

Paul Georges/Don Gummer—Large-scale figurative paintings and landscapes of his home in Normandy, France/New metal sculptures whose cubic forms are cast from cardboard boxes and arranged in configurations that play with aspects of gravity, light, and balance. Through 12/31. Salander-O'Reilly, 20 E. 79th St. (879-6606).

Knox Martin—Recent large-scale abstract paintings that continue the artist's use of overlapping forms and juxtapositions of high-key colors; through 2/28/99. Gat, 1100 Madison Ave. (327-0441).

John Moore—New paintings of views of Tel Aviv that were begun in the fall of 1997 when the artist was working in Israel at the invitation of the Tel Aviv Museum of Art; through 12/31. Hirschl & Adler, 21 E. 70th St. (535-8810).

Sigmar Polke—New paintings that continue the artist's use of printing errors as a motif; through 1/16/99. Werner, 21 E. 67th St. (988-1623).

Richard Tipping—Sculptures that refer to such twentieth-century icons of art and culture as May Ray and Sigmund Freud, and "word-works," pieces that playfully alter the meanings of street and warning signs; 12/12–1/16/99. Ubu, 16 E. 78th St. (794-4444).

57th Street Area

John Alexander/Patrick Mimran—Recent paintings of scenes from nature/Paintings of geometric patterns in encaustic on wood. Through 1/9/99. Marlborough, 40 W. 57th St. (541-4900).

Julie Allen/Wes Mills—Sculptures of intimate apparel made from plastic wrap, wax paper, tape, candy, and other materials/Abstract works in graphite and powdered pigment on paper. Through 1/16/99. Helman, 20 W. 57th St. (245-2888).

Steven Assael—Figurative paintings and drawings; through 1/9/99. Forum, 745 Fifth Ave. (355-4545).

Nell Blaine—Paintings made over the past twenty years by the second-generation New York School artist (1922–1996), and a group of watercolors completed over the last two years of her life, including landscapes of Gloucester, Massachusetts, and New York's Riverside Park, and interiors with bouquets; through 12/30. De Nagy, 724 Fifth Ave. (262-5050).

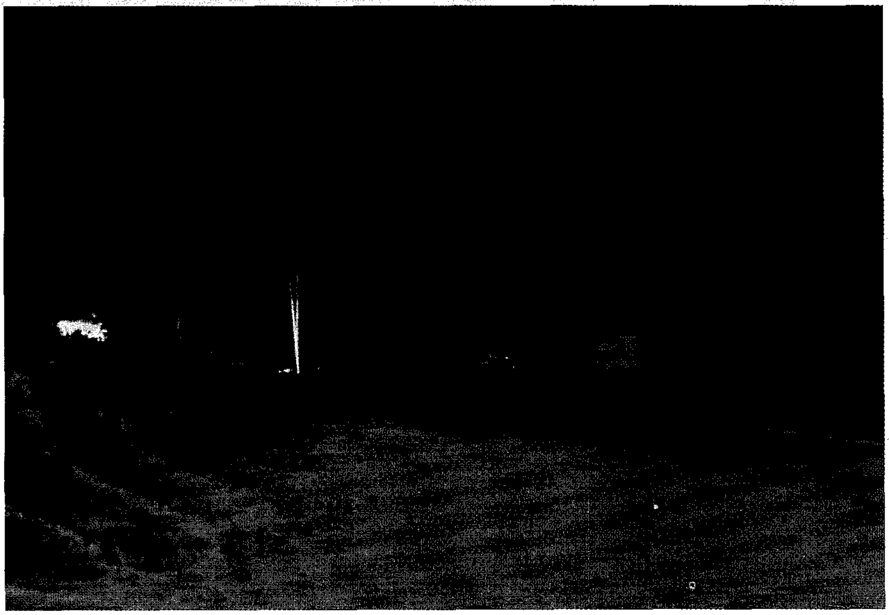
Waltercio Caldas—Recent sculptures by the Brazilian conceptual artist; through 1/16/99. Lelong, 20 W. 57th St. (315-0470).

Anthony Caro—A selection of the British sculptor's ceramic works; through 1/9/99. Clark, 24 W. 57th St. (246-2205).

Photography

Clean Streets

Conventional Connecticut houses get a touch of evil in Miranda Lichtenstein's foreboding images taken at night, illuminated by only her car's head- and taillights. At Steffany Martz, 529 West 20th Street; through December 19.



Photograph courtesy of Steffany Martz.

Jacob Lawrence—New paintings that revisit the artist's earlier theme of builders and their tools; through 12/30. D C Moore, 724 Fifth Ave. (247-2111).

Gabriel Orozco—New large-scale sculptures, photographs, drawings, and video works; through 1/9/99. Goodman, 24 W. 57th St. (977-7160).

Lucas Samaras—New works, including jewelry, X-ray-film portraits, and pencil drawings; through 1/2/99. PaceWildenstein, 32 E. 57th St. (421-3292).

Ena Swansea/Alison Wilding—New paintings of plant-like images that appear to be back-lit/New sculpture. Through 1/5/99. Miller, 41 E. 57th St. (980-5454).

SoHo and TriBeCa

Stephen Antonakos—Early assemblages and neon constructions, including the artist's minimalist sculpture *Blue Box* made in 1965; through 12/26. Algus, 25 Thompson St. (966-1758).

Arman—An installation of four black grand pianos that have been systematically divided into fragments; through 1/9/99. Gibson, 568 Broadway (925-1192).

Francis Bacon—Paintings by the late British artist dating from 1950 to 1991 that have not been previously exhibited, through 1/16/99. Shafrazi, 119 Wooster St. (274-9300).

Gudrun Kristjansdottir—Paintings of the Icelandic landscape that reduce it to its simplest formal elements; through 1/9/99. Ross, 568 Broadway (343-2161).

Kim MacConnel—New paintings, photographs, sculpture, and 50 works on paper that represent the artist's investigations into all of the world's cultures; through 12/31. Solomon, 172 Mercer St. (941-5777).

Suzanne McClelland—New paintings and drawings that explore language; through 12/31. Kasmin, 74 Grand St. (219-3219).

Roxie Munro—Paintings depicting views of New York looking north from the artist's Union Square studio; through 1/9/99. Ingbar, 568 Broadway (334-1100).

Adrian Piper—A work made in the early seventies that comprises performance, documentations of performances, cartoons published in *The Village Voice,* and drawings on photographs that document the evolution of a creature called "The Mythic Being"; through 1/16/99. Erben, 476 Broome St. (966-5283).

Mia Westerlund Roosen—Recent sculpture, including a 70-foot wall piece that spans the length of the gallery; through 1/9/99. Lennon, Weinberg, 560 Broadway (941-0012).

Rémy Zaugg—A series of silk-screen paintings that depict layers of words; through 1/16/99. Alexander, 59 Wooster St. (925-4338).

Chelsea

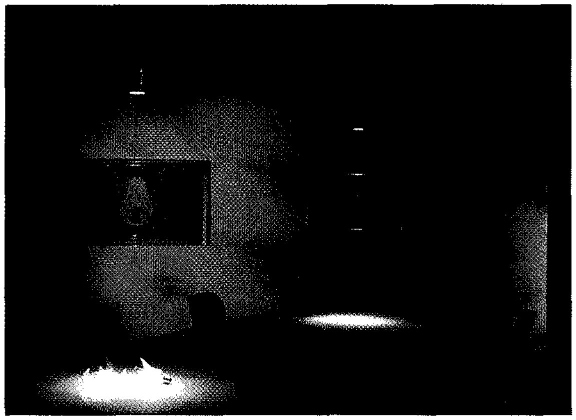
Doug Aitken—Two new installations, one exploring volcanic Monserrat and another manipulating light, flooring, walls, video monitors, and sounds of auctioneer's voices to dramatize the clash between rural and urban environments; through 1/16/99. 303, 525 W. 22nd St. (255-1121).

Alfonse Borysewicz—Paintings that form a chapel structure and interrogate Catholicism; through 1/30/99. Anderson, 453 W. 17th St. (463-0970).

Richard Devore/Byron Kim—Black-glazed clay pots/Reductive paintings of skyscapes and seascapes in

Retrospective

The Body Electric



From the time of its second design exhibit, "Machine Art," in 1934, the Museum of Modern Art has celebrated the inherent beauty of industrial products. Nevertheless, your basic incandescent lightbulb would seem to challenge even the most open-minded curator—until you see MOMA's new exhibit celebrating Ingo Maurer, the lighting designer whose bright ideas imbue that most mundane household item with exuberance. A Maurer desk lamp, "Lucellino," outfits a bare bulb with feathery wings, posing as if it's about to flutter away from its base, tethered by only a pair of thin cables. (Touching one wire with a finger activates a dimmer.) A hanging fixture called "Wo bist Du, Edison?" ("Where are you, Edison"?) has no visible bulb at all—but catch it at the right angle, and a floating hologram of Edison's best-known invention appears, more or less where the missing bulb would be. The most spectacular piece in the exhibit, however, is "Porca Miseria!" a chandelier made of shattered white dishes mounted on thin steel rods, the whole construction radiating outward from a brilliant white light—a kaboom of crockery frozen a millisecond after the big bang. It's a huge, wildly impractical piece, more sculpture than design, and Maurer seems to know it: "Each one is different," he says, "and we've only made about twelve." Who could live with such a thing every day? He smiles and points at the one on display: "That's the one from my house." CHRISTOPHER BONANOS

Ireland. Through 1/2/99. Protetch, 511 W. 22nd St. (633-6999).

Thornton Dial/Larry Gianettino—Recent large-scale textured paintings on wood panels by the self-taught artist/Large color photographs of very small objects. Through 1/16/99. Ricco/Maresca, 529 W. 20th St. (627-4819).

Felix Gonzalez-Torres—A selection of works by the late artist that depict images of crowds cut from newspapers and a group of stack pieces created from New York *Times* clippings that were made between 1990 and 1991; through 1/16/99. Rosen, 525 W. 24th St. (627-6000).

Gary Hill—Computer-generated video installations by the Seattle artist; through 1/23/99. Gladstone, 515 W. 24th St. (206-9300).

David Jakim—Paintings of urban landscapes; through 1/9/99. Billis, 526 W. 26th St. (645-2621).

Thomas Locher—Text works and aluminum sculptures incorporating text; through 1/9/99. Gasser & Grunert, 524 W. 19th St. (807-9494).

Reinhard Mucha—An installation of six wall vitrines that display photographs of the artist's son in and around construction sites; through 1/9/99. Luhring Augustine, 531 W. 24th St. (206-9100).

Jacques Roch—Paintings silk-screened with symbolic cartoonlike characters; through 12/31. Foster, 529 W. 20th St. (966-9024).

Gary Simmons—Chalk drawings of views from trains contrasted with color photographs of empty halls and classrooms; through 1/16/99. Metro Pictures, 519 W. 24th St. (206-7100).

Shirley Wiitasalo/Moira Dryer—The first U.S. exhibit of a Canadian artist's abstract paintings/Ironic abstract paintings by the late Canadian artist whose work was the subject of a posthumous show at MOMA in 1993. Through 1/23/99. Greene Naftali, 526 W. 26th St (463-7770).

Brenda Zlamany—Recent landscape paintings inspired by a trip the artist took last year to Cambodia, Vietnam, and Laos, and self-portraits that borrow elements of Renaissance portraiture; through 1/2/99. Stux, 529 W. 20th St. (352-1600).

Group Shows

Madison Avenue and Vicinity

Berry-Hill—11 E. 70th St. (744-2300). "Ashcan Kids," an exhibition of oil paintings, drawings and prints of children by early American Realists Bellows, Glackens, Henri, Luks, and Sloan; through 1/16/99.

CDS—76 East 79 St. (772-9555). Drawings, paintings, constructions, and sculpture by prominent Latin American artists Aizenberg, Bonevardi, Fonseca, and Gramcko; through 1/31/99.

Graham—1014 Madison Ave. (535-5767). A retrospective of works previously presented in Manhattan's oldest family-run gallery, including pieces by Anshuntz, Bluemner, du Bois, Shinn, Suba, others; through 1/9/99.

57th Street Area

Equitable—787 Seventh Ave. (554-4818), Mon.–Fri. 11–6, Sat. 12–5. "Court and Conquest: Ottoman Origins and the Design for Handel's *Tamerlano* at the Glimmerglass Opera." Rare Turkish and Persian illuminated manuscripts, arms and armor, textiles, and jewelry dating from the fifteenth to the nineteenth centuries juxtaposed with the ensemble of costumes created for Handel's baroque opera by theatrical designer Judy Levin; through 1/23/99.

Findlay—41 E. 47th St. (486-7660). "Nonobjective Painting in America, 1920-1950," abstract works by Bauer, Fischinger, Kerns, Rebay, Salemme, others; through 1/9/99.

SoHo and TriBeCa

Art in General—79 Walker St. (219-0473). Sculptural land forms composed of domestic materials by Kim Yasuda; a window installation confronting love through correspondence by Steed Taylor; "Audio Project in the Elevator" by musician Tai Zervas; and "Crossing Lines," an exhibition of works by New York artists Burnham, Evangeline, Feingold, Gomez, Odita, and others; through 1/12/99.

Golden—39 Wooster St. (274-0080). "Blade Runner," with works exploring urban technology by Aitken, Burson, Essenhigh, London, Ross, Wasow, others; through 1/1/99.

Exit Art—548 Broadway (966-7745). "The Choice," the first of a yearlong series of projects experimenting with curatorial practice on a national and international level, featuring works by emerging artists chosen by twelve artist-curators, among them Ida Applebroog, Nicole Eisenman, Robert Gober, Frank Moore, Laurie Simmons, and Kiki Smith; through 1/2/99.

Kind—136 Greene St. (925-1200). "The Risk of Existence," an exhibit curated by painter Mark Greenwold of works by Bacon, Balthus, Cadmus, Close, Currin, Murphy, Nutt, Stout, Yuskavage, others; through 12/31.

Lombard Freid—470 Broome St. (334-5060). "Urban Romantics," an exhibition of paintings, sculptures, drawings and photographs by Bechthold, Borthwick, Durant, Sassen, Etkin, Hopkins, Kelly, and Williams; through 1/9/99.

Chelsea

Art Resources Transfer, Inc.—210 11th Ave. (691-5956). Conversation exhibition of works by Luba Kiercosz and Jim Pavlicovic, through 12/13; conversation exhibition of works by Michael Milton and George Woodman, through 12/31; project by Mark Hadjipateras; through 12/31.

Cheim & Read—521 W. 23rd St. (242-7727). Three paintings by Francis Bacon, works by Louise Bourgeois, and 64 self-portraits by Franz Xavier Messerschmidt; through 12/31.

Coploff—526 W. 26th St. (741-1149). "little," including very small paintings by Bocchino, Brennan, Coffey, Grassie, Hyde, Jacquette, Jones, Lyon, Masullo, Prol, Slonem, and Wayne; through 1/9/99.

Healy—530 W. 22nd St. (243-3753). "Hedge," works that articulate time in various ways by contemporary and late modern artists, including Chamberlain, Cornell, Grinnell, Nauman, Ontani, Sachs, Sikander, Smith, Stout, and Warhol; through 1/8/99.

White Box—601 W. 26th St. (727-0767). "Plural Speech," with language-centered works by Bing, Elaine, Koorland, Mingwei, and Romberg; through 2/6/99.

Other

White Columns—320 W. 13th St. (924-4212). Paintings, sculpture, installations, video, and performance works by young Scandinavian artists Ahtila, Antonnson, Elmgreen, Hausswolff, Lislegaard, Ström, others; through 1/3/99.

Photography

Ansel Adams/Edward Weston—Images by two patriarchs of twentieth-century photography; through 1/23/99. Danziger, 851 Madison Ave. (734-5300).

Dick Arentz—Recent platinum and palladium prints collected in the artist's new book, *The Grand Tour*, 12/10–1/16/99. Benrubi, 52 E. 76th St. (517-3766).

Virginia Beahan and Laura McPhee—Collaborative large-scale color photographs of landscapes around the world; through 12/31. Miller, 138 Spring St. (226-1220).

Philip-Lorca diCorcia—Twenty new large-scale photographs of people taken on streets all over the world; through 1/16/99. PaceWildenstein, 142 Greene St. (431-9224).

Ellis—47 E. 68th St. (327-1482). An exhibition of modernist aviation and airplane photographs from 1920 through 1950 by Costain, Hatlem, Tolmer, Quigley, others; through 12/30.

Lynn Geesaman—New photographs in conjunction with the artist's new book, *Poetics of Place*; through 1/9/99. Richardson, 560 Broadway (343-1255).

Jan Groover/Lee Friedlander—New color still lifes and prints from 1989; through 12/20/A rotating exhibition of Iris prints from the photographer's new book, *American Musicians*; through 12/31. Borden, 560 Broadway (431-0166).

ICP—1130 Fifth Ave., at 94th St. (768-4682), Tues.–Thurs. 10–5, Fri. 10–8 (voluntary contribution 5–8), Sat. and Sun. 10–6; $6, $4 students and seniors. A photo essay of a Brooklyn teenage gang by Bruce Davidson; through 3/7/99. . . . "Intimate City: The Photographs of Thomas Roma." Approximately 40 gelatin prints depicting various aspects of New York City life and drawn from five projects that became books, among them *Come Sunday* and *Sunset Park*; through 3/7/99.

Photograph by Tom Vack, Como, Chicago, courtesy of Ingo Maurer.

ICP Midtown—1133 Sixth Ave., at 43rd St. (768-4682), Tues.–Thurs. 10–5, Fri. 10–8 (5–8 admission by voluntary contribution), Sat. and Sun. 10–6; $6, $4 students and seniors. "Man Ray: Photography and Its Double." Two hundred and fifty photographs from the artist's personal archives, including nudes, fashion photographs, his famed Rayographs, and portraits of artists such as Dali and Joyce; through 1/24/99.

Miranda Lichtenstein—Photographs taken at night on various roads in rural Connecticut using a car's headlights and brake lights as the only source of light; through 12/19. Martz, 529 W. 20th St. (206-3686).

Nicholas Nixon—More than ten years of photographs from the artist's "Family Pictures" series; through 1/23/99. Zabriskie, 41 E. 57th St. (752-1223).

Jean Pagliuso—Three decades of photographs, from the artist's work at fashion magazines like *Vogue* and *Mademoiselle* to her recent images of Cambodian temple ruins printed on handmade paper; through 1/8/99. Mayer, 55 E. 73rd St. (879-1241).

Aura Rosenberg—Portraits of artists, including Baldessari, Durham, Graham, Heilmann, Kelly, Simmons, Smith, others; through 1/16/99. Wooster Gardens, 558 Broadway (941-6210).

Saul—A historical retrospective of "interior imaging, from X-ray to MRI," including scientific images and works by artists Liebovitz, Moholy-Nagy, Muniz, Rauschenberg, Spano, Suguira, others; through 1/16/99. 560 Broadway (431-0747).

Fazal Sheikh—New black-and-white photographs and ink-jet prints of Afghan refugees; through 1/16/99. PaceWildensteinMacGill, 32 E. 57th St. (759-7999).

Museums

American Craft Museum—"Picasso's Ladies: Jewelry by Wendy Ramshaw." Brooches, rings, necklaces, and earrings by a British artist, each work inspired by a particular Picasso portrait of a woman; through 1/3/99. . . . "Transformation: Prix Saidye Bronfman Award 1977–1996." Works by contemporary Canadian craft artists who have been winners of the Saidye Bronfman Award; through 1/3/99. 40 W. 53rd St. (956-3535); Tues., Wed., Fri., Sat., Sun. 10–6, Thurs. till 8 (pay as you wish 6–8); $5, $2.50 students and seniors.

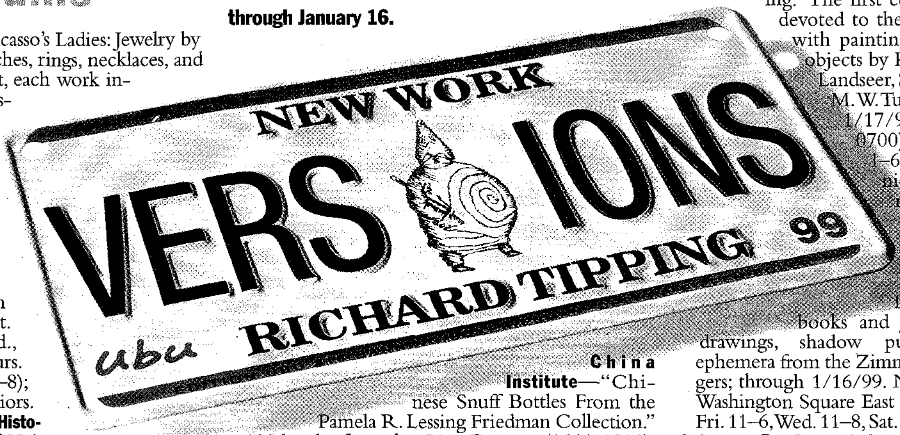
American Museum of Natural History—"The Sacred Arts of Haitian Vodou." The first exhibition to explore the arts of the African-Caribbean religion of vodou, featuring more than 500 objects on loan from public and private collections in the United States, Haiti, and Europe; through 1/3/99. . . . "Papua New Guinea: Arts and Spirits, Photographs From the Middle Sepik River, 1953–54." Color and black-and-white photographs of Papua New Guinea's indigenous species, art, architecture, and people, taken by Museum ornithologist E. Thomas Gilliard during his 1953–54 expedition; through 3/28/99. Central Park West at 79th St. (769-5100); Sun.–Thurs. 10–5:45, Fri. and Sat. 10–8:45; $8 suggested contribution, $6 students and seniors, $4.50 children.

Asia Society—"Inside Out: New Chinese Art." An exhibition being presented simultaneously at the Asia Society and the P.S. 1 Contemporary Art Center of more than 80 works created between 1985 and 1998 by artists in China, Hong Kong, and Taiwan, and by those who left China in the early eighties; through 1/3/99. 725 Park Ave., at 70th St. (517-ASIA), Tues.–Sat. 11–6, Sun. 12–5, Thurs. 11–8 (6–8 free admission); $4, $2 seniors and students.

Bard Graduate Center for Studies in the Decorative Arts—"India: A Jewelry Spectrum." The first comprehensive exhibition devoted to Indian jewelry; through 1/31/99. 18 W. 86th St. (501-3000), Tues.–Sun. 11–5 (Thurs. to 8); $2, $1 students and seniors.

Brooklyn Museum of Art—"Japonism in Fashion: Japan Dresses the West." An exhibit exploring the influence of Japanese art and design on Western fashion through more than 70 costumes and accessories dating from the second half of the nineteenth century to the present; through 2/14/99. . . . "Royal Persian Paintings: The Qajar Epoch 1785–1925." Paintings, illustrated manuscripts, lacquer works, and enamels from the Qajar dynasty, which ruled Iran from 1785 to 1925; through 1/24/99. . . . "Lewis Wickes Hine: The Final Years." 110 photographs of New York, only ten of which have been seen by the public, including images documenting the construction of the Empire State Building, the arrival of immigrants at Ellis Island, and workers in mills and factories; 12/18–4/4/99. . . . "Domestic Transformations: Working in Brooklyn." Wallpaper, carpets, furniture, and ceramic tiles by Brooklyn-based artists Ann Agee, Jean Blackburn, Ron Baron, and Andy Yoder; 12/17–3/14/99. 200 Eastern Pkwy., Brooklyn (718-638-5000); Wed.–Fri. 10–5, Sat. 11–9 (museum open until 11 P.M. on the first Saturday of every month), Sun. 11–6; $4, $2 students, $1.50 seniors.

Talent **Australian artist and poet Richard Tipping tips his hat to such twentieth-century icons as Man Ray and Albert Einstein in his sculptures and "word-works" (below) that playfully alter the meanings of street and warning signs (and license plates). At Ubu Gallery, 16 East 78th Street; December 12 through January 16.**



China Institute—"Chinese Snuff Bottles From the Pamela R. Lessing Friedman Collection." 130 bottles from the Qing Dynasty (1644–1911); through 12/6. 125 E. 65th St. (744-8181), Mon.–Sat. 10–5, Tues. and Thurs. 10–8, Sun. 1–5; $5, $3 students and seniors.

Cooper-Hewitt National Design Museum Smithsonian Institution—"Unlimited by Design." An exhibition focusing on products, services, and environments designed to meet the needs of people throughout their lives; through 3/21. . . . "The Architecture of Reassurance: Designing the Disney Theme Parks." The first full-scale exhibition of works from the Walt Disney Imagineering archives, tracing the history of the theme parks from original concepts through recent developments; through 1/10/99. 2 E. 91st St. (849-8300), Wed.–Sat. 10–5, Sun. 12–5, Tues. 10–9 (free admission 5–9); $5, $3 seniors and students.

Dahesh Museum—"French Oil Sketches and the Academic Tradition." Oil sketches by nineteenth-century masters of the academic tradition, among them Baron Françoise-Pascal-Simon Gérard, Jean-Louis Meissonier, and Jean-Louis Gérôme; through 1/2/99. 601 Fifth Ave., at 49th St. (759-0606), Tues.–Sat. 11–6; free.

Dia Center for the Arts—"Andy Warhol: Shadows." A work that made in 1978 composed of more than 100 silk-screened and hand-painted panels; through 6/13. . . . "Thomas Schütte: Scenewright." Early installations, small-scale modeled figures, proposals for monuments, watercolors, and photographs by the German artist; through 6/13/99. . . . "Joseph Beuys: Drawings After the Codices Madrid of Leonardo da Vinci, and Sculpture." Works from Dia's permanent collection, including 96 drawings made in response to two sketchbooks by Leonardo da Vinci, and sculptures; through 6/13/99. . . . "Robert Irwin: *Excursus: Homage to the Square 3*." The second part of a site-specific installation by the California artist; through 6/13/99. 548 W. 22nd St. (989-5566), Thurs.–Sun. 12–6; $4, $2 students and seniors.

Drawing Center—"Willem de Kooning: Drawing Seeing/Seeing Drawing." Four groups of drawings created by the artist between 1958 and the late seventies; through 12/19. . . . "Trisha Brown: Free Measures: Drawings." The first museum exhibition of the choreographer's drawings; through 12/19. 35 Wooster St. (219-2166), Tues.–Fri. 10–6, Sat. 11–6; donation suggested.

El Museo del Barrio—"The Art of Jack Delano." Documentary photographs of interiors, people, and landscapes contributed by the artist to the Farm Security Administration during the thirties; through 2/28. . . . "Domino/Dominó: A Mixed-Media Installation by Bibiana Suárez"; through 2/7/99. . . . "Gods, Spirits, and Legends: Twentieth-Century Art in El Salvador." The first thematic show of paintings from El Salvador in the United States, featuring 40 works by 17 artists born between 1900 and 1960; through 2/28. . . . "Casitas: Gardens of Reclamation." Large-scale photographs of casitas, small structures built by Puerto Rican immigrants in vacant lots and gardens throughout New York City; through 2/28/99. 1230 Fifth Ave. (831-7272), Wed.–Sun. 11–5; $4, $2 students and seniors.

Frick Collection—"Victorian Fairy Painting." The first comprehensive exhibition devoted to the distinctly British genre, with paintings, works on paper, and objects by Richard Dadd, Sir Edwin Landseer, Sir John Everett Millais, J. M. W. Turner, and others; through 1/17/99. 1 E. 70th St. (288-0700); Tues.–Sat. 10–6, Sun. 1–6; $7, $5 students and seniors; children under 10 not admitted.

Grey Art Gallery—"Counter Culture: Parisian Cabarets and the Avant-Garde, 1875–1905." Illustrated books and journals, prints, posters, drawings, shadow puppet silhouettes, and ephemera from the Zimmerli Art Museum at Rutgers; through 1/16/99. New York University, 100 Washington Square East (998-6780), Tues., Thurs., Fri. 11–6, Wed. 11–8, Sat. 11–5; donation suggested.

Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum—"Rendezvous: Masterpieces From the Centre Georges Pompidou and the Guggenheim Museums." More than 300 modern paintings, sculptures, and drawings from collections of the two museums; through 1/24/99. 1071 Fifth Ave., at 88th St. (423-3500); Sun.–Wed. 10–6, Fri. and Sat. 10–8 (Fri. 6–8, pay what you wish), closed Thurs.; $12, $7 seniors and students.

Guggenheim Museum SoHo—"Premises: Invested Spaces in Visual Arts, Architecture, and Design From France, 1958–1998." An exhibition exploring 40 years of French artistic and architectural practice, with works by Christian Boltanski, Yves Klein, Le Corbusier, Annette Messager, and others; through 1/10/99. 575 Broadway, at Prince St. (423-3500), Sun. and Wed.–Fri. 11–6, Sat. 11–8 (6–8 pay what you wish); $8, $5 seniors and students.

Hispanic Society of America—"Images for the Spanish Monarchy: Art and the State, 1516–1700." Paintings, illuminated manuscripts, rare books, prints, and medals that were made during the reign of the Hapsburg family; through 2/21/99. 613 W. 155th St. (926-2234), Tues. Sat. 10–4:30, Sun. 1–4; free.

Japan Society—"The Art of 20th-Century Zen: Paintings and Calligraphy by Japanese Masters." Works by fourteen Zen masters; through 1/10/99. 333 E. 47th St. (832-1155), Tues.–Sun. 11–6; $3 suggested contribution.

Photograph by Jeremy Shatan.

Jewish Museum—"Common Man, Mythic Vision: The Paintings of Ben Shahn." The first major museum exhibit of the artist's paintings since 1976, comprising works made by the artist between 1936 and 1965; through 3/7/99. . . . "After Rabin: New Art From Israel." Paintings, photography, installation, video, and artist books by contemporary Israeli artists; through 1/3/99. . . . "Light X Eight: The Hanukkah Project." Video projections and light sculptures by eight artists installed in unexpected locations inside and outside the museum. Beginning on 12/13, one work will be premiered each night of the eight day holiday until all are on view by 12/21; through 1/31/99. 1109 Fifth Ave., at 92nd St. (423-3200); Sun., Mon., Wed., Thurs. 11–5:45, Tues. 11–8 (Tues. after 5 free); $8, $5.50 students and seniors.

Metropolitan Museum of Art—"Anselm Kiefer: Works on Paper, 1969–1993." A selection of works on paper that offer an overview of the ideas and themes of the first two decades of the German painter's career; 12/15–3/21/99. . . . "Cubism and Fashion." Cubism-influenced clothing by Madeleine Vionnet, Callot Soeurs, and Gabrielle Chanel, as well as examples of contemporary fashion; 12/10–3/14/99. . . . "Annual Christmas Tree and Neapolitan Baroque Crèche." The museum's annual presentation of its eighteenth-century Neapolitan Nativity and a candle lit spruce tree; through 1/3/99. . . . "Donato Creti, Melancholy and Perfection." Paintings by the nineteenth-century Italian artist; through 1/31/99. . . . "Charles Burchfield From the Collection." Watercolors, paintings, and prints created between 1915 and 1963; through 2/28/99. . . . "Edgar Degas, Photographer." The first exhibition to gather all of the surviving major photographs by the French artist (1834–1917), including figure studies, portraits of the artist's friends, and self-portraits; through 1/3/99. . . . "Mary Cassatt: Drawings and Prints in the Metropolitan Museum of Art." Rarely displayed works by the nineteenth-century American Impressionist (1844–1926)who worked in France for much of her career; through 1/24/99. . . . "Heroic Armor of the Italian Renaissance: Filippo Negroli and His Contemporaries." Classically inspired Renaissance armors made in Milan during the years 1530–50 by Filippo Negroli and his workshop; through 1/17/99. . . . "Sacred Visions: Early Paintings From Central Tibet." Approximately 60 Tibetan thankas and painted objects dating from the mid-eleventh to the mid-fifteenth century; through 1/17/99. . . . "From Van Eyck to Bruegel: Early Netherlandish Painting in the Metropolitan Museum of Art." Works by the great masters of the period, among them Petrus Christus, Hans Memling, Rogier van der Weyden, and Joos van Cleves, as well as works by Jan van Eyck and Pieter Bruegel the Elder; through 1/3/99. . . . "Jade in Ancient Costa Rica." Pendants, mace heads, ear ornaments, beads, and other objects carved from jade in Costa Rica between 300 B.C. and A.D. 700; through 2/28/99. . . . "Letters in Gold: Ottoman Calligraphy From the Sakip Sabanci Collection, Istanbul"; through 12/13. . . . "Louis Comfort Tiffany at the Metropolitan Museum of Art." Decorative art objects drawn from the museum's holdings, including leaded-glass windows and lamps, blown-glass vases, furniture, metalwork, enamels, and jewelry; through 1/31/99. . . . "Félix Vallaton: Woodcuts and Three Paintings." Woodcuts from the 1890s paintings from the 1920s by a Swiss artist who worked in France; through 2/21/99. . . . "Clay Into Art: Selections From the Collection of Contemporary Ceramics"; through 5/30/99. . . . "The Academy of the Sword: Illustrated Fencing Books, 1500–1800." More than 25 rare books accompanied by swords, daggers, shields, and gauntlets from the museum's collection; through 8/30/99. . . . 1000 Fifth Ave., at 82nd St. (879-5500); Tues.–Thurs. and Sun. 9:30–5:15, Fri. and Sat. 9:30–9; $8 contribution, $4 children and seniors. The Cloisters, Fort Tryon Park (923-3700); Tues.–Sun. 9:30–4:45 (closes at 5:15 between April and September); $8, $4 seniors and students.

Museum for African Art—"Baule: African Art/Western Eyes." Objects created by the Baule people of Africa's Ivory Coast; through 1/30/99. 593 Broadway (966-1313), Tues.–Fri. 10:30–5:30, Sat. 12–8, Sun. 12–6; $5, $2.50 seniors, students, and children.

Ground Rules:

In the summer, galleries are generally open Mon. through Fri. from between 10 and 11 to between 5 and 6.

Museum of American Folk Art—"Masterpieces in Wood: American Folk Marquetry From the Hirschhorn Foundation." Nineteenth-century American folk marquetry chairs, tables, boxes, frames, game boards, and other furniture and decorative works from the collection of Robert and Marjorie Hirschhorn; through 1/10/99. 2 Lincoln Square (595-9533), Tues.–Sun. 11:30–7:30; free.

Museum of Jewish Heritage—"ORTworks: Modernizing Jewish Labor in the Early 20th Century." Rare photographs of Jewish beekeepers, seamstresses, blacksmiths, and other workers who received vocational and agricultural training from ORT (Organization for Rehabilitation through Training) programs from the twenties through the forties; through 2/11/99. 18 First Place, Battery Park City (968-1800), Sun.–Wed. and Fri. 9–5, Thurs. 9–8, eve of Jewish holidays 9–2, closed Sat. and Jewish holidays; $7, $5 students and seniors.

Museum of Modern Art—"Jackson Pollock." The first retrospective of the Abstract Expressionist's work since the one mounted by the Museum of Modern Art in 1967; through 2/2/99. . . . "Focus: Pollock and Printmaking." A selection of prints by Jackson Pollock from the museum's collection; through 2/2/99. . . . "Dubuffet to de Kooning: Expressionist Prints From Europe and America"; through 2/2/99. . . . "The New York School." Drawings ranging in date from the late forties through the early fifties by artists affiliated with the New York School, from the museum's collection; through 1/12/99. . . . "Miró's Black and Red Series: A New Acquisition in Context." The eight etchings of Joan Miró's 1938 Black and Red series, as well as 150 prints, illustrated books, drawings, posters, photographs, paintings, and sculptures by Miró and his contemporaries; through 2/2/99. . . . "Structure and Surface: Contemporary Japanese Textiles." A selection of 100 works by influential fiber artists, textile designers, and fashion designers currently working in Japan; through 1/26/99. . . . "New Photography 14: Jeanne Dunning, Olafur Eliasson, Rachel Harrison, Sam Taylor-Wood." Photographs and works incorporating photography by four artists whose ideas have been nourished by their work in other media; through 1/12/99. . . . "The Mies van der Rohe Award for Latin American Architecture." Enrique Norton's award-winning entry for the Televisa Multipurpose Building in Mexico City (1995) and the submissions of nine of the 24 finalists for the award; through 12/15. . . . "Projects 66: Campana/Ingo Maurer." The first American museum exhibition of the furniture of Fernando and Humberto Campana, from São Paulo, Brazil, and the lamps of Ingo Maurer, of Munich Germany; through 1/19/99. . . . "Ufa Film Posters, 1918–1943." Fifty posters for films produced or distributed by Ufa, Germany's legendary movie studio; through 1/5/99. 11 W. 53rd St. (708-9480); Sat.–Tues. 10:30–6, Thurs. 10:30–6, Fri. 10:30–8:30 (4:30–8:30 pay what you wish), closed Wed.; $9.50, $6.50 students and seniors.

Museum of the City of New York—"The Little Apple: Souvenir Buildings From the Collection of Ace Architects." A selection of miniature models of New York buildings created over the past 100 years; through 3/28/99. . . . "New York Horizontal: Cirkut Camera Views by William Hassler." Thirty rare panoramic views of WWI-era New York; through 5/2/99. . . . "New York Vertical by Horst Hamman." Photographs that emphasize the verticality of New York's skyscrapers; through 4/18/99. . . . "New York on the Rise: Architectural Renderings by Hughson Hawley"; through 4/4/99. . . . "Broadway! The Great White Way in 1898." Photographs, costumes, manuscripts, and other memorabilia of New York's theater district of the 1890s; through 1/31/99. 1220 Fifth Ave., at 103rd St. (534-1672), Wed.–Sat. 10–5, Sun. 1–5; suggested contribution $5, $3 students and seniors.

Museum of the Fashion Institute of Technology—"Claire McCardell and the American Look." Clothing, design sketches, photographs, and ephemera documenting the designer's career; through 1/9/99. . . . "C'AD Infinitum: Textiles, Techniques, & Technology." An exhibition exploring new computer technologies; through 1/2/99. Seventh Ave. at 27th St. (217-7642), Tues.–Fri. 12–8, Sat. 10–5; free.

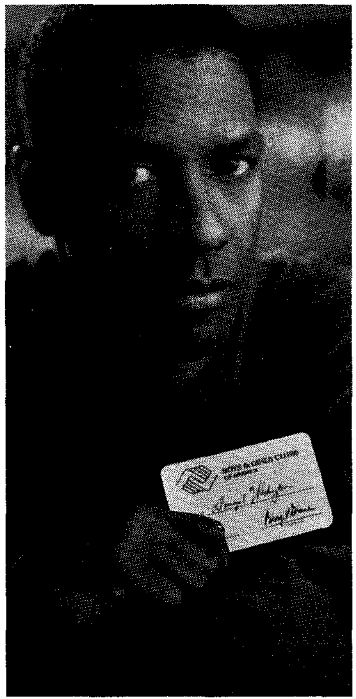
National Academy Museum and School of Fine Arts—"Faces of *Time*: 75 Years of *Time* Magazine Cover Portraits." Original works commissioned as *Time* magazine cover illustrations; through 1/3/99. . . . "Artists and the Avant-Garde Theater in Paris, 1887–1900"; through 1/3/99. 1083 Fifth Ave., at 89th St. (369-4880), Wed., Thurs., Sat., Sun. 12–5, Fri., 12–8 (Fri. 5–8 pay what you wish); $5, $3.50 seniors and students.

New Museum of Contemporary Art—"Dancing at the Louvre: Faith Ringgold's *French Collection* and Other Story Quilts." Quilt paintings from the series that tell the fictional adventures of an African-American woman in Paris, working as an artist and model during the heyday of Picasso, Matisse, and Gertrude Stein; through 1/3/99. . . . "Marcel Odenbach." A selection of video installations by the German artist; through 1/3/99. . . . "Ana Prada." Site-specific sculptures created from ordinary materials; through 1/3/99. . . . "Xu Bing: Introduction to Square Word Calligraphy." An installation of a classroom in which visitors are provided with traditional Chinese calligraphy instruments and practice pads and invited to learn the fundamentals of calligraphy; through 1/10/99. 583 Broadway (219-1222), Wed. and Sun. 12–6, Thurs., Fri., and Sat. 12–8, (free Thurs. 6–8); $5, $3 students, artists, and seniors, free for youths 18 and under.

New York Public Library—"*In thy map securely saile*: Maps, Atlases, Charts, and Globes From the Lawrence H. Slaughter Collection, Map Division." Seventeenth- and eighteenth-century works that were donated to the library's Map Division in 1997 by the estate of Lawrence H. Slaughter; through 3/20/99. . . . "Eight Million Stories: Twentieth-Century New York Life in Prints and Photographs From the New York Public Library." Works by Berenice Abbott, Lewis Hine, Edward Hopper, Martin Lewis, Weegee, and others; through 1/9/99. . . . "Barney Tobey." A selection of cartoons by one of *The New Yorker*'s first staff cartoonists; through 1/9/99. Fifth Ave. and 42nd St. (869-8089); Mon. 10–6, Tues.–Wed. 11–6, Thurs.–Sat. 10–6; free.

New-York Historical Society—"Treasures From Mount Vernon: George Washington Revealed." A rare collection of Washington items that have never been exhibited outside Mount Vernon, among them his letters, his camp bed used during the Revolutionary War, and his pistol and four swords, and a variety of personal objects; through 2/22. . . . "New York's Finest: A History of the New York City Police Department." Photographs, newspapers, weapons, uniforms, and crime detection equipment; through 3/21/99. . . . "19th-Century Etchings From the Collection of Reba and Dave Williams." American prints by Blance Dillaye, William St. John Harper, Thomas Moran, and others; through 1/10/99. . . . "George B. Post: Great American Architect." Architectural renderings of some of New York's early skyscrapers by the nineteenth-century architect (1837–1913); through 1/10/99. . . . 2 W. 77th St. (873-3400); Tues.–Sun. 11–5; $5, $3 seniors and children.

P.S. 1 Contemporary Art Center—"Cities on the Move 3." Works by artists, architects, and urbanists exploring the effects of modernization, globalization, introduction of new technologies, and the explosive population growth in Asian cities; through 1/31/99. . . . "Inside Out: New Chinese Art." An exhibition being presented simultaneously at the Asia Society and P.S. 1, of works created between 1985 and 1998 by artists in China, Hong


Denzel Washington

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BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS OF AMERICA

The Positive Place For Kids

Brock *continued from page 39*

liberated by it. Dismissing his peers as a "spiteful bunch," he says, "They can't say anything about me that I haven't already said myself."

By his own account, Rivera has enjoyed his sexual freedom, and his critics eagerly point out that his personal experiences have undoubtedly framed his benign view of Clinton's sexcapades. But Rivera's identification with Clinton goes deeper. One evening after the show, he took his guests, including former governor Mario Cuomo and Jerry Shargel, for drinks at Miss Elle's. The formal Cuomo seemed ill at ease as Geraldo played master of ceremonies. The situation wasn't helped when a patron came up and delighted Rivera with the suggestion of a Rivera-Cuomo ticket in 2000—in that order. Holding forth on Clinton, he suddenly turned to Shargel and said: "He's one of us, man! He's our generation." As a lawyer, Rivera is as anti-crime as they come—witness his stance on the O.J. case. But he believes the creation by Starr of a victimless crime was a dangerous abuse of power. "He always comes out on the side of the underdog," says Craig Rivera, summing up his brother's philosophy.

Ironically, Rivera's unbridled indignation may be just what's missing from his new show, *Upfront Tonight*. The audience-grabbing tacky splendor is gone, too: He's swapped his jeans for suit pants and hosts a succession of nearly dead white men as his headline guests—Henry Kissinger, William F. Buckley, Marlin Fitzwater, and Al Haig, who addressed Rivera on air as "Reynaldo." So far, the show is a disappointment. Rivera concedes it has not found its "raison d'être."

For Rivera, it's the age-old insider-outsider conundrum. One CNBC source says the problem is that "Geraldo isn't himself" on *Upfront Tonight*. But inside NBC, the worry is that Rivera is too much himself and may never be accepted by a wider news audience as a straight anchor. The first network news special landed with a dull thud as well. For the first time ever, people are saying that Rivera is—of all things—boring, which also raises a question for *Rivera Live*, at least until another O.J. or Monica comes along. Of course, the moment he's *not* boring, the journalistic cognoscenti will be ready to run him out of town again.

Perhaps Rivera can't have it both ways after all, but he says he's not worried. "After Willowbrook, everyone said, 'You'll never get another story like that.' But I'm not just good on the air. I'm a good producer. It's a learned response. Lightning will strike again," he says, sighing deeply. "My only solace is that I'm on my sixth generation of critics, and I've outlived them all." ■

Kong, and Taiwan, and by those who left China in the early eighties; through 1/3/99. . . . "David Levinthal: Cowboy Corridor." Photographs of cowboy dolls from the artist's "Wild West" series; through 1/24/99. . . . "Yoshie Ueki." Recent embroidery works; through 1/17/99. . . . "Robert Brinker: Nine Lambs (A Flock)"; through 1/24/99. 22-25 Jackson Ave., at 46th Ave. (718-784-2084), Wed.–Sun. 12–6; $5 suggested donation.

Pierpont Morgan Library—"Charles Dickens: A Christmas Carol." An exhibit featuring one of the library's greatest literary treasures, the original manuscript of *A Christmas Carol*, as well as items relating to the work; through 1/3/99. . . . "Master Drawings From the Hermitage and Pushkin Museums." Approximately 120 western-European drawings from the fifteenth to the twentieth century; through 1/10/99. . . . "Russian Arts and Letters." Manuscripts and printed books from the late imperial and early Soviet eras, drawn from the library's permanent collection; through 1/17/99. 29 E. 36th St. (685-0008), Tues.–Thurs. 10:30–5, Fri. 10–8, Sat. 10:30–6; Sun. 12–6; $7; $5 students and seniors.

Queens Museum of Art—"Looking at the 90s: Four Views of Current Mexican Photography." Works by 18 contemporary Mexican photographers selected by four Mexican critics and curators; through 1/3/99. . . . "Collecting for Queens: Selections From the Permanent Collection." Paintings, drawings, and photographs collected by the museum in the nineties, by Dawoud Bey, Chakaia Booker, John Coplans, Grace Hartigan, Theodore Roszak; through 1/3/99. New York City Building, Flushing Meadows Corona Park, Queens (718-592-9700), Wed.–Fri. 10–5, Sat. and Sun. 12–5; $3, $1.50 students and seniors.

Studio Museum in Harlem—"From the Studio: Artists in Residence 1997–1998." Works created over the past year by Sheila Batiste, Brett Cook-Dizney, and Julio Valdez during their yearlong tenure within the Studio Museum in Harlem's Artist-in-Residence Program; through 2/28/99. 144 W. 125th St. (864-4500).

Whitney Museum of American Art—"Duane Hanson: A Survey of His Work From the 30s to the 90s." A retrospective of works by the sculptor (1925–1996) known for his life-size, realistic renderings of ordinary people; 12/17–2/28/99. . . . "Bob Thompson." The most comprehensive survey of paintings by the African-American figurative expressionist (1937–1966) to date; through 1/3/99. . . . "Pale Guide to Transparent Things." A related group of photographic works by Seton Smith; through 4/4/99. 945 Madison Ave., at 75th St. (570-3676); Wed., Fri., Sat., Sun. 11–6, Thurs. 1–8 (6–8 pay what you wish); $9, $7 students and seniors (free Thurs. 6–8). Note: the museum will be open Tues. Dec. 12 and Tues. Dec. 29 from 11–6; on Thurs. Dec. 25 and Thurs. Dec. 31 museum will be open from 1–6.

Whitney Museum of American Art at Philip Morris—"Shirin Neshat: Turbulent." A film installation examining the boundaries of gender roles in contemporary Iranian life; through 1/15. 120 Park Ave., at 42nd St. (878-2550), Mon.–Fri. 11–6 (Thurs. till 7:30); free.

Auctions

Christie's—502 Park Ave., at 59th St. (546-1119). 12/9 at 10: "Lewis Carroll and Alice: The Personal Collection of Justin G. Schiller." 12/9 at 10 and 2: "Jewelry." On view from 12/5. 12/10 at 10 and 2: "20th Century Decorative Arts."

Christie's East—219 E. 67th St. (546-1000). 12/9 at 10 and 2: "Jewelry." On view from 12/5.

Phillips—406 E. 79th St. (570-4830). 12/13 at 12: "Fine and Period Jewelry." On view from 12/9.

Sotheby's—1334 York Ave. at 72nd St. (606-7000). 12/9 at 2: "Jewelry." On view from 12/4. 12/9 at 6:30: "Fashion." On view from 12/5. 12/10 at 10:15 and 2: "Jewelry." On view from 12/4. 12/11 at 10:15 and 2: "Posters." 12/12 at 10:15 and 2: "Toys." On view from 12/5. 12/15 at 10:15: "Silver." On view from 12/11. 12/15 at 10:15 and 2: "Books." On view from 12/11.

theater

Nicole Kidman in *Blue Room*...Mary Louise Wilson

Broadway

Previews and Openings

The Blue Room—Nicole Kidman—!!!—and Iain Glen each play five roles in David Hare's modern adaptation of *La Ronde,* Arthur Schnitzler's classic story of interconnected couples and sexual anxieties. London critics found Kidman's performance—and body, briefly unclad—to die for. $15–$60. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. In previews for a 12/13 opening. *Cort Theatre, 138 W. 48th St. (239-6200).*

Parade—This new musical joins two formidable forces in the theater—director Hal Prince (*Sweeney Todd, Kiss of the Spider Woman,* the original *Cabaret*) and writer Alfred Uhry (*Driving Miss Daisy, The Last Night of Ballyhoo*). The seemingly un-songworthy subject, the wrongful lynching of a factory manager for the murder of a young white girl, is what one would expect of Prince; the context, Jewish Atlanta in the early part of this century, is what one would expect of Uhry. Newcomer Jason Robert Brown did the music. Brent Carver stars. $40–$75. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. In previews for a 12/17 opening. *Lincoln Center's Vivian Beaumont Theater, 150 W. 65th St. (239-6200).*

Now Playing

Art—I sympathize with this play by Yasmina Reza. The plot is simple. Serge spends 200,000 francs on a five-by-four painting by the renowned Antrios that is all white except for some diagonal scratches. His friend Marc considers this Antrios shit, and Serge's purchase of it an insult to their friendship. He tries to enlist the third of our musketeers, Yvan, to side with him. But confronted with Serge and the painting, Yvan does what he does best: He wavers. Reseeing the play with a new British cast was eye-opening. Brian Cox, Henry Goodman, and David Haig work wonders. (Simon: 3/16/98 and 10/5/98.) $45–$60. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. Opened 3/1/98. *Royale Theatre, 242 W. 45th St. (239-6200).*

Beauty and the Beast—A musical based on a movie based on a fairy tale. Setting box-office and, presumably, merchandising records even as we speak. Toni Braxton plays the girl; James Barbour plays the (hairy) boy. Lyrics by Tim Rice and Howard Ashman; music by Alan Menken. $22.50–$75. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. *Palace Theatre, 1564 Broadway, at 47th St. (307-4100).*

The Beauty Queen of Leenane—Martin McDonagh's Drama Desk Award–winning drama about an old woman's attempts to sabotage her daughter's love life. $20–$60. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. *Walter Kerr Theatre, 219 W. 48th St. (239-6200).*

Bring In 'da Noise, Bring In 'da Funk—George C. Wolfe and Savion Glover's Tony-winning history of African-Americans as told through tap dancing, poetry, and song. $20–$70. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. *Ambassador, 219 W. 49th St. (239-6200). 2 hrs.*

Cabaret—The Roundabout is to be roundly applauded for re-creating Sam Mendes's 1993 London production, even if with some diminishment. Aided by Rob Marshall as co-director and choreographer, Mendes confirms his directorial reputation with the nightclub scenes. Joe Masteroff's refurbished book emphasizes the squalor of 1930 Berlin nightlife and the bisexuality of Clifford, the writer hero. The supporting cast delivers staunchly. Shortcomings notwithstanding, this revival has enough to satisfy all but the most fastidious. (Simon: 3/30/98.) Now starring Jennifer Jason Leigh as Sally Bowles. $65–$80. Tues.–Sat. at 8:00, Wed., Sat., and Sun. at 2. Opened 3/19/98. *Studio 54, 254 W. 54th St. (239-6200).*

Cats—Now and for the foreseeable future. By Andrew Lloyd Webber, of course, with an assist from T. S. Eliot. $37.50–$70. Mon. and Tues. at 8, Wed. at 2 and 8, Fri. at 8, Sat. at 2 and 8, Sun. at 3. Opened: 10/7/82. *Winter Garden Theater, 1634 Broadway, at 50th St. (239-6200). 2 hrs. 30 mins.*

Onstage

Poetry in Motion

Michael Moschen, all-around goof and recipient of a MacArthur "genius" grant for having mastered the art of juggling, comes to the Kitchen with his new show, 'On the Shoulders of . . . ,' for a four-night run beginning December 9. The man's act is a whirring tribute to chaos theory; watch as he unlocks the beauty and kinetic potential of everyday objects. For tickets ($22) and more information, call 255-5793.

Photograph by Wayne Sorce.

Chicago—Revisiting this splendid production two years later presents three big obstacles. As Velma, the German star Ute Lemper cannot duplicate Bebe Neuwirth's devastating sardonicism, sprightly kittenishness, and superhuman timing. On Lempert, Neuwirth's demeanor and delivery sit like a sailor suit on Grandma Moses. Similarly, Karen Ziemba, a lovely dancer and likable singer, radiates innocent chirpiness that is all wrong for Roxie, so magisterially created by Ann Reinking, brassily sexy and silkenly skewering. The fussy oiliness of Tom McGowan, the new Amos, simply flops. Still, there are compensations. You now pay more attention to the glittering ensemble work of the rest, and relish the new and even better Mary Sunshine of R. Bean. (Simon: 11/30/98.) $20–$75. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 2 and 8, Sun. at 2 and 7. *Shubert, 225 W. 44th St. (239-6200).*

Electra—Zoë Wanamaker has so far electrified audiences in London and Princeton with her interpretation of Agamemnon's grieving, vengeful daughter; she's very likely to do the same thing here, in this new production of Sophocles' play, ably adapted by Frank McGuinness, who updated last season's Tony-winning *A Doll's House.* Also starring Claire Bloom. $35–$60. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. *Ethel Barrymore Theatre, 243 W. 47th St. (239-6200).*

Fool Moon—That brilliant bit of physical tomfoolery from Bill Irwin (gentleman wag) and David Shiner (naughty wag) returns. Suckers for Charlie Chaplin and Buster Keaton should make reservations now—and brace themselves for the prospect of gentle public humiliation. $25–$55. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. *Brooks Atkinson Theatre, 256 W. 47th St. (307-4100).*

Footloose—Kevin Bacon is not a part of this maxi-musical adaptation of the 1984 movie, but the lead does have his haircut. The kids sing the same Kenny Loggins and Tom Snow songs. And they recite anxious-teen dialogue by the same screenwriter, Dean Pitchford. Let's hear it for the boy! $20–$75. Mon.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2. *Richard Rodgers Theatre, 226 W. 46th St. (307-4100).*

I'm Still Here . . . Damn It!—Sandra Bernhard returns with the one-woman show that enraptured audiences last season at the Westbeth. She promises there'll be a lot of new material in this version, but its essence—catty, chatty, batty—should remain the same. $35–$55. Mon.–Sat. at 8. *Booth Theatre, 222 W. 45th St. (239-6200).*

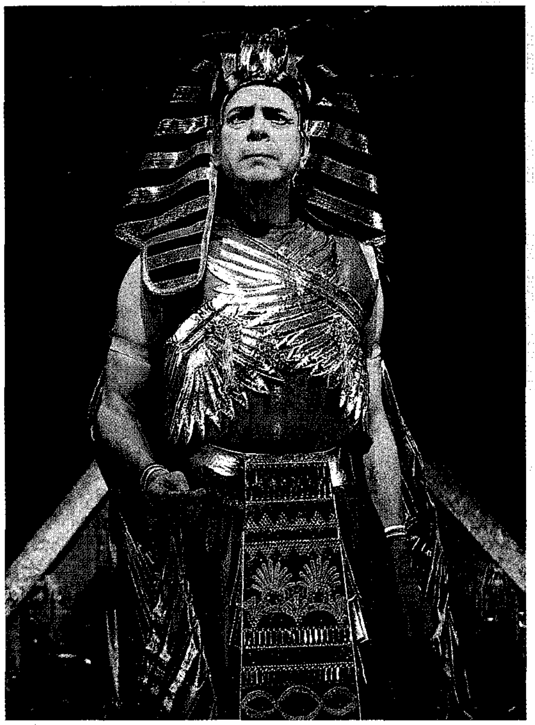
Jekyll & Hyde—Man turns into beastly man, all in the name of science. Book and lyrics by Leslie Bricusse, music by Frank Wildhorn. $45–$75. Tues.–Sat. at 8; Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. *Plymouth Theatre, 236 W. 45th St. (239-6200).*

Les Misérables—The implacable Inspector Javert hounding the innocent ex-convict Jean Valjean; the pathetic Fantine, wronged by the entire world, dying as she entrusts her daughter, Cosette, to the now-pros-

Opening
Saint Peter

Oh, the injustice of it all! To walk offstage and no longer have Paul Rudnick's piquant, pointed words spiking your heels! "I think people sometimes expect that I'll speak just like him," says Peter Bartlett, Rudnick's muse and leading man of choice. "And I can't. I remember when I first met Paul, all I felt was, 'No! Go away! I can't keep up.' " Happily, Bartlett has a piercing wit and prodigious talents of his own. Rudnick says he tailored several roles in his latest play, *The Most Fabulous Story Ever Told,* expressly for the London-trained actor, as he did the title character of *Mr. Charles, Currently of Palm Beach,* which tickled audiences at Ensemble Studio Theatre a few months ago. *Fabulous* opens December 14 at the New York Theatre Workshop. "Peter is a sublime actor and a comic genius," declares Rudnick. "I not only hear his voice when I write; I channel his hand gestures. I consider his eyebrows a form of punctuation." Bartlett modestly insists that any zhlub could ably interpret Rudnick's work. "I quite frankly don't think Paul needs me," he says. "I'm an older gay man with a sense of humor, but there are a lot of those." Yet surely the two men share a certain sensibility? A certain fruity, fun-house way of viewing the world? Bartlett sighs. "I can't say," he says. "It's ineffable." The subject of Rudnick's play—God—should be, too, but the writer makes a pretty good go of it, retelling the story of the Old Testament with two gay couples—Adam and Steve, Jane and Mabel—at its center. Bartlett plays a whole host of characters, among them the boy-king of Egypt ("I'm 56! It's my last chance!"), a guy named Trey, and a bunny on Noah's ark. Rudnick writes with his usual flair. Sample line: "Darling, please. Angels are just Prozac for poor people." And the chic shall inherit the Earth.

Jennifer Senior



Photograph by Joan Marcus.

perous Mayor Valjean; the dastardly Thénardiers bringing up Cosette as a scullion while cosseting their own daughter, Eponine—what a story! Just synopsizing the plot brings tears to the iciest eyes. (Simon: 3/31/97.) $15–$75. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. *Imperial Theater, 249 W. 45th St. (239-6200).*

The Lion King—This spectacle rightfully earns that most abused of epithets: *magical*. Kiddies will delightedly swallow it whole. But this is the one such show adults will feast on, too, mostly because of the wonders wrought by Julie Taymor, who designed and directed this cornucopia of dazzlements. Puppetry from East and West is put to superlative use, yet the actors, singers, and dancers are accorded enough humanity to ply their anthropomorphic skills. And Taymor has found ways to transmute the strictly cartoonish bravura of the big-screen Lion King onto a stage so that nothing is lost in translation. (Simon: 12/1/97). $20–$80. Wed.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 1 and 6:30. Opened 11/13/97. *New Amsterdam Theater, 214 W. 42nd St. (307-4747).*

Little Me—Neil Simon tailor-made the book of this Cy Coleman and Carolyn Leigh musical for Sid Caesar, and Martin Short—with his quick-molting skin and rubbery face—is an Antony to Caesar if ever there was one. Watch as he tears through the roles of Noble Eggleston (doctor, lawyer, governor of both Dakotas), Amos Pinchley (miser), Otto Schnitzler (Hollywood despot), and four others, while Faith Prince sails along as his belle Belle from Drifter's Row. $75. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed., Sat., and Sun. at 2. Through 2/7. *Roundabout Theatre Company, 1530 Broadway, at 45th St. (719-1300).*

Miss Saigon—This reworking of Puccini's *Madama Butterfly,* set in Vietnam during the fall of Saigon, is now one of Broadway's ten longest-running musicals. Music by Claude-Michel Schonberg; lyrics by Alain Boublil and Richard Maltby Jr.; directed by Nicholas Hytner. $15–$75. Mon.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2. Opened: 4/11/91. *Broadway Theater, 1681 Broadway, at 53rd St. (239-6200).*

On the Town—With the exception of its dance numbers, this revival received mostly enthusiastic notices when the Public Theatre mounted it in Central Park two seasons ago. The show now opens on Broadway, newly choreographed, with the entire cast intact. (Hello, sailors!) They're a mostly unknown bunch—as befits the musical that gave Jerome Robbins, Leonard Bernstein, Betty Comden, and Adolph Green their Broadway debuts—but they're also an energetic one, as befits the story of a trio of sailors on shore leave. $20–$75. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. *Gershwin Theatre, 222 W. 51st St. (307-4100).*

Peter Pan—This is a story about a boy who never grows up; Cathy Rigby, bless her, has also not outgrown her role. She's back, for a third time, flyin' and asking the kiddies to clap till their hands are raw. $25–$75. Fri. at 7, Sat. at 2 and 7:30, Sun. at 1 and 6:30, though schedule often varies; call for specific showtimes. *Marquis Theatre, 1535 Broadway, at 45th St. (307-4100).*

The Phantom of the Opera—Nine leads, ten years, and roughly 7 million theatergoers later, Andrew Lloyd Webber's blockbuster continues to pack them in. $15–$75. Mon.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2. *Majestic Theater, 247 W. 44th St. (239-6200).*

Ragtime—A musical based on E. L. Doctorow's historical novel, with a book by Terrence McNally and music by the composer-lyricist team of Stephen Flaherty and Lynn Ahrens. The epic braids the fates of three fictitious families—one black, one Jewish, one Wasp—and an assortment of historical characters. $31–$125. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. *Ford Center for the Performing Arts, 213 W. 42nd St. (307-4100).*

Rent—The late Jonathan Larson's reimagining of Puccini's *La Bohème* as it might be lived by a gaggle of contemporary sick and hip types living in the East Village. $35–$80. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 2, Sun. at 2 and 7. *Nederlander Theater, 208 W. 41st St. (307-4100). 2 hrs. 45 mins.*

The Scarlet Pimpernel—A show about romance, honor, the French Revolution, and, most important, fabric. Pop composer Frank Wildhorn (*Jekyll & Hyde*) did the score. Nan Knighton has recently revised her book, adapted from Baroness Orczy's novel for the stage. Douglas Sills stars. $20–$75. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. *Minskoff Theatre, 200 W. 45th St. (307-4100).*

Side Man—This enjoyable play by Warren Leight is about sidemen, yesteryear's second-tier jazz musicians who hired out as supplementary players to various bands, and about their women. It is narrated by Clifford, the son of Gene, a trumpet player, and Terry, a sweet thing turned bitter. As the play moves from 1985 to 1953 and back, we hear about his parents' courtship, his birth, and the parents' growing estrangement as he grows up. We also get glimpses of the lives of Gene's fellow sidemen. As things move from comedy to drama, we relish the jive, the jokes, the frustrations enacted by seven actors in a production neatly tied together by Michael Mayer's apt direction. (Simon: 3/23/98.) Now with Christian Slater. $25–$60. Tues. at 8, Wed. at 2 and 8, Fri. at 8, Sat. at 2 and 8, and Sun. at 3. *Golden Theatre, 252 W. 45th St. (239-6200).*

Smokey Joe's Cafe: The Songs of Leiber and Stoller—They say the neon lights are bright on Broadway, and when this show—drawn from the songbook Jerry Leiber and Mike Stoller wrote to accompany the American baby-boomer childhood experience—breezes into New York City, people gonna scrape and bow. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. $65–$75. *At the Virginia Theatre, 245 W. 52nd St. (239-6200)?* Uh-huh. *2 hrs. 10 mins.*

The Sound of Music—Returns to Broadway for the first time since its 1959 premiere. Hum along; bring the kids. Rebecca Luker, who played a memorable Magnolia in *Show Boat,* plays the nun turned governess, and Dennis Parlato plays the widower captain. $50–$75. Wed.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 1 and 6:30. Opened 3/12/98. *Martin Beck Theatre, 302 W. 45th St. (239-6200).*

Swan Lake—Ordinarily a white plague of tutus and tulle, this new interpretation of Tchaikovsky's ballet by Matthew Bourne is decidedly *noir,* and the swans are all male. London loved it. $15–$75. Mon.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2. Through 1/23. *Neil Simon Theatre, 250 W. 52nd St. (307-4100).*

Titanic—What it lacks in suspense it makes up for in Tony awards (five, in 1997, including Best Musical). Music and lyrics by Maury Yeston; book by Peter Stone. Directed by Richard Jones. $45–$80. Mon.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2. *Lunt-Fontanne Theatre, 205 W. 46th St. (307-4100).*

Off Broadway

Previews and Openings

Bosoms and Neglect—John Guare's tragicomic story of a blind old woman, her pathologically anxious son, and her equally troubled daughter. With Mary Louise Wilson; directed by Nicholas Martin, who so marvelously directed her in *Full Gallop.* $37.50. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 2 and 8, Sun. at 3. In previews for a 12/13 opening. *Signature Theatre Company, 555 W. 42nd St. (244-PLAY)*

A Couple of Blaguards—Tired yet of the brothers McCourt? Good! We thought not. Come see Frank and Malachy's stage version of their story, performed by actors Mickey Kelly and Shay Duffin. $40–$42.50. Mon., Tues., Thurs., and Fri. at 8; Sat. and Sun. at 3 and 7:30. In previews for a 12/14 opening. *Triad Theatre, 158 W. 72nd St. (799-4599).*

Far East—A new play from A. R. Gurney (*The Cocktail Hour, Sylvia, Love Letters*) about a young American Navy lieutenant who finds himself caught between the wife of his commanding officer and the woman he loves. Directed by Daniel Sullivan; starring Michael Hayden. $50. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. *Lincoln Center's Mitzi E. Newhouse Theater, 150 W. 65th St. (239-6200).*

Freedomland—Amy Freed's Pulitzer-nominated, neurotic new comedy about sibling rivalry starring Veanne Cox. $37.50. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 3 and 8, Sun. at 3 and 7:30. In previews for a 12/16 opening. *Playwrights Horizons, 416 W. 42nd St. (279-4200).*

Hope Is the Thing With Feathers—Three couples—one young, one middle-aged, one old—tell their stories of suffering and yearning in a collage of styles. Written by Frank Pugliese; presented by the thus-far-impeccable Drama Dept. Wed.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 7 and 9:30. In previews for a 12/9 opening. *Greenwich House Theater, 27 Barrow St. (541-8441).*

Mercy—A new play by Laura Cahill about the assorted loves, neuroses, and aspirations of four young New Yorkers. $35. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sun. at 3 and 7:30. In previews for a 12/9 opening. *Vineyard Theatre, 108 E. 15th St. (353-3874).*

The Most Fabulous Story Ever Told—The New York Theatre Workshop presents the newest play by Paul Rudnick, wicked author of *Addams Family Values, In & Out,* and various bits of acclaimed gay fantasia. In the author's words: "It's a comedy about God, if that's not redundant." Heavens, no. $45. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. and Sun. at 3 and 8. In previews for a 12/10 opening. *New York Theatre Workshop, 79 E. 4th St. (460-5475).*

Spread Eagle—Brian Murray stars in this new drama about a celebrated stage actor who abandons his career and hies down to Mexico. Written by Jim Luigs. $35. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sun. at 3 and 7:30. In previews for a 12/8 opening. *WPA Theatre, 519 W. 23rd St. (206-0523).*

Now Playing

All Under Heaven—Valerie Harper stars as Pearl S. Buck, political activist, essayist, and first American woman to win the Nobel Prize for literature. Written by Harper and Dyke Garrison. $45. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. *Century Theater, 111 E. 15th St. (239-6200).*

Blue Man Group: Tubes—Smart silliness, with toilet paper, neon-colored paint, cereal, etc. Wildly inventive, and appropriate for just about everyone—kids, adults, foreigners, haters and lovers of performance art. $39–$49. Tues., Wed., Thurs. at 8, Fri. and Sat. at 7 and 10, Sun. at 4 and 7. *Astor Place Theatre, 434 Lafayette St. (254-4370).*

Chaim's Love Song—A new play by Marvin Chernoff about the relationship between a young Irish woman and a retired mailman. $35. Wed. at 5 and 8, Thurs. at 2, Fri. at 2 and 8, Sat. at 2 and 5, Sun. at 1. Through 2/7. *Raymond J. Greenwald Theatre, 307 W. 26th St. (633-6322).*

A Christmas Carol—The Madison Square Garden perennial returns, this time with Roger Daltrey (who?) as Scrooge. $19–$80. Schedule varies; call for details. *Theatre at Madison Square Garden, 4 Pennsylvania Plaza (307-4111).*

Collected Stories—Donald Margulies's almost-Pulitzer-winning play about the friendship between a protégée and her mentor—and how it transforms when the former uses intimate details of the latter's life in her first published novel. Uta Hagen and Lorca Simons star. $42.50–$47.50. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. *Lucille Lortel Theatre, 121 Christopher St. (239-6200).*

Communicating Doors—A devilishly cunning prestidigitator, this Alan Ayckbourn! In this, the forty-ninth of his 53 plays, he combines three genres: the drawing-room comedy, the thriller, and the time-tripping fantasy. He manages to get them roisterously into one another's hair, exactly as entangled as he wants them at any skittish moment. We are in the same Regal Hotel suite in 2018, 1998, and 1978. But this is no standard hotel suite. Its communicating doors to the next suite are a whirling time machine with which the two female protagonists can time-travel. What the two women struggle to achieve is to change history: to undo two murders. (Simon: 9/7/98.) $25–$45. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 5 and 9, Sun. at 3 and 7. *Variety Arts Theatre, 110 Third Ave., at 13th St. (239-6200).*

De la Guarda: Villa Villa—A show that's part carnival, part rock concert, and almost entirely airborne. Dress in tatters; bring aspirin. $37.50–$45. Tues.–Thurs. at 8, Fri. and Sat. at 7 and 10, Sun. at 7. *Daryl Roth Theatre, 20 Union Square East, at 15th St. (239-6200).*

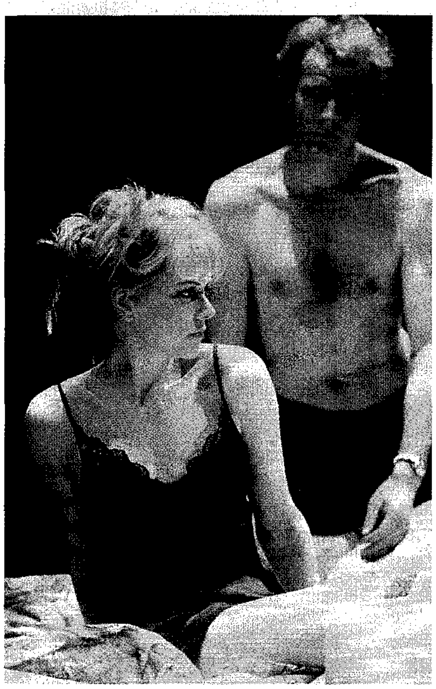
Degenerate Art—Irondale Ensemble reprises its ambitious project from last spring, re-creating tableaux of "corrupting" artworks banned by the Reich in 1937. $25. Wed.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 3 and 8. Through 12/12. *Theatre for the New City, 155 First Ave., at 9th St. (633-1292).*

Dinah Was—Before dying at age 39, Dinah Washington, who immortalized "Come Rain or Come Shine" and other hummable lovelies, became the first black woman to appear on the all-white pop charts. Lillias White tells her story in this new play with music. $25–$47.50. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 2 and 8, Sun. at 3 and 7. Through 1/3. *Gramercy Theatre, 127 E. 23rd St. (307-4100).*

Duet!—Adobe Theatre's amusing spoof of a fifties romance—in which dead frogs, talking trees, and Mandarin renditions of "Anything Goes" all come mysteriously into play. $20–$45. Mon., Tues., and Thurs. at 8, Fri. at 8 and 10:30, Sat. at 7 and 10, Sun. at 3. *Actor's Playhouse, 100 Seventh Ave. South (239-6200).*

Opening To Die For

Look! Over there! It's Nicole Kidman! Onstage! And she's naked! 'The Blue Room,' David Hare's adaptation of 'La Ronde,' a classic tale of sexual intricacies and anxieties, opens December 13 at the Cort. The other actor in the show is Iain Glen, by the way. He's naked, too.



Fantasticks—The musical perennial that, happily, refuses to go away. $35. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 3 and 7, Sun. at 3 and 7:30. Opened: 5/3/60. *Sullivan St. Playhouse, 181 Sullivan St. (674-3838).*

Forbidden Broadway Cleans Up!—Gerard Alessandrini's newest update of his long-running musical spoof poking fun at the assorted absurdities of the Great White Way. $45–$47.50. Mon. and Wed.–Fri. at 8:15; Sat. at 2:30 and 8:15; Sun. at 3:30 and 7:30. Food and drink available/optional. *Stardust Theatre, Broadway at 51st St. (239-6200).*

Hedwig and the Angry Inch—John Cameron Mitchell conceived and wrote this rock concert–cum–musical, in which a German war bride finds herself in a Kansas trailer park and achieves self-actualization, not to mention tabloid fame, through songwriting. Also featuring Stephen Trask and his downtown band, Cheater. $39.50–$49.50. Mon. and Wed.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 7 and 10, Sun. at 4 and 7. Opened 2/14/98. *Jane Street Theatre at the Hotel Riverview Ballroom, 113 Jane St. (239-6200).*

I Love You, You're Perfect, Now Change—They're here. They're straight. Get used to it. It's a daring innovation, perhaps, but this musical revue about what, in the context of most contemporary musicals, seems an amusingly quaint subject these days—heterosexual love—has bravely decided to buck the trend. $47.50–$50. Mon. and Tues. at 8, Fri. and Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2:30, Sun. at 3 and 7:30. *Westside Theatre, 407 W. 43rd St. (239-6200).*

Impossible Marriage—Holly Hunter, at her best when she's three pegs off-center and a giddy pile of exposed nerves, reassumes her rightful place on the New York stage in this new play about two sisters—one on the cusp of a bad marriage and one already in one. Written by Beth Henley (*Crimes of the Heart*). $55. Tues.–Sat. at 7:30, Wed., Sat. and Sun. at 2:30. Through 1/10. *Roundabout Theatre Company, 1530 Broadway, at 45th St. (719-1300).*

Killer Joe—Amanda Plummer and Scott Glenn, pleasures both on stage and screen, star in Tracy Letts's new (and first) play about a dysfunctional family in a Texas trailer park. $47.50. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sun. at 5, Wed. and Sat. at 2:30. *Soho Playhouse, 15 Vandam St. (239-6200).*

Late Nite Catechism—Maripat Donovan as a parochial-school-teaching nun backed by a magisterium of unassailable moral authority and some mean wrist action with a ruler. $35. Wed.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 2 and 5. *St. Luke's Church Annex, 308 W. 46th St. (239-6200).*

The Mystery of Irma Vep—The late Charles Ludlam's penny-dreadful vehicle for himself, Everett Quinton, and a glistening mound of wigs. It was a loopy sensation in 1984; Quinton returns for this repeat engagement with the young actor Stephen DeRosa. $45. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 7 and 10, Sun. at 3 and 7. *Westside Theater, 407 W. 43nd St. (239-6200).*

A Night in November—Dan Gordon returns as Kenneth McCallister, as well as his many friends and relations, in Marie Jones's super-acclaimed one-man show about the strife in Northern Ireland. $40–$45. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 2 and 8, Sun. at 3. Through 1/3. *Douglas Fairbanks Theatre, 432 W. 42nd St. (239-6200).*

Nunsense A-Men!—Must be habit-forming. An all-male version of Off Broadway's second-longest-running musical. Music, book, and lyrics by Dan Goggin. $30–$40. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. *47th Street Theatre, 304 W. 47th St. (239-6200).*

The Old Settler—Primary Stages starts its season with this 1995 play by John Henry Redwood about two sisters, both middle-aged, and the effects a young boarder has on their relationship when he tries to woo one of them out of their Harlem tenement. Starring the very fine Leslie Uggams. $30–$35. Wed. at 2 and 8, Thurs. and Fri. at 8, Sat. at 2 and 8, Sun. at 3 and 7:30. Through 1/2. *Primary Stages, 354 W. 45th St. (333-4052).*

Over the River and Through the Woods—A new comedy from Joe Pietro, author of *I Love You, You're Perfect, Now Change,* about the meddling efforts of four Italian-American grandparents to change the life of their grandson. $45. Mon. and Wed.–Sat. at

Photograph by Mark Douet.

Opening

Back in the Saddle Again

Mary Louise Wilson, who so divinely realized the role of the unsinkable Diana Vreeland in *Full Gallop* two seasons ago, is back in an intimate setting, this time with two other actors to keep her company. In John Guare's *Bosoms and Neglect*, she plays a blind, cancer-addled 83-year-old with an emotionally unbalanced son. Thank heavens it's a comedy. Opens December 13 at Signature Theatre Company.

8, Wed. and Sat. at 2:30, Sun. at 3. *John Houseman Theatre, 450 W. 42nd St. (239-6200).*

Perfect Crime—Warren Manzi's long-running thriller about a wealthy psychiatrist accused of murdering her husband, and the small-town detective who tries to prove she committed the "perfect crime." $35. Mon. and Thurs.–Sat. at 8, Sun. at 3 and 7, Wed. and Sat. at 2. Opened: 4/5/87. *Duffy Theatre, 1553 Broadway, at 46th St. (695-3401).*

Power Plays—A series of three one-act comedies, written by Alan Arkin and Elaine May and starring their children. $35–$47.50. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed., Sat., and Sun. at 2:30. *Promenade Theatre, 2162 Broadway, at 76th St. (239-6200).*

R & J—A four-man, prop-free version of *Romeo and Juliet* that will likely stand out among the tragedy's many newfangled interpretations. $40. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 3 and 8, Sun. at 3 and 7. *John Houseman Studio Theatre, 450 W. 42nd St. (239-6200).*

Sakina's Restaurant—Writer and performer Aasif Mandvi dramatizes the Indian immigrant experience through his tale of working in a restaurant on East Sixth Street. $30. Mon. and Wed.–Sat. at 8, Sun. at 3 and 7. *American Place Theatre, 111 W. 46th St. (239-6200).*

Secrets Every Smart Traveler Should Know—There is a decent amount of merriment to be had from this revue. Inspired—or incited—by a homonymous travel guide, this show by a number of hands pokes fun at every aspect of travel, from the hopeless phone calls for airline reservations to the joys of sandy Uzbekistan. Nothing is overlooked, though some things are a mite undercooked. Even the Ca*th*tilian li*th*p ge*th* a tuneful *th*ong tribute. (Simon: 12/15/97.) $20–$47.50; optional dinner one hour before curtain. Mon., Wed., Thurs., and Fri. at 8, Sat. at 2:30 and 8, Sun. at 3 and 7:30. *Ibis Theatre, 321 W. 44th St. (799-4599).*

The Shaughraun—The Irish Rep. revives a rarely performed 1874 Boucicault melodrama—complete with forbidden passion, swordplay, and damsels in distress. $30–$35. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 3 and 8, Sun. at 3. Through 1/3. *Irish Repertory Theatre, 132 W. 22nd St. (727-2737).*

Stomp—As the title implies, a loud, aggressive, and energetic show in which a troupe of performers dances, claps, and generally bangs on everything in sight. Featuring buckets, brooms, trash-can lids, and, yes, the kitchen sink. $24.50–$49.50. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 7 and 10:30, Sun. at 3 and 7. *Orpheum, 126 Second Ave., bet. 7th and 8th Sts. (477-2477).*

Stop Kiss—Diana Son's new play about a smart, single woman whose world flips upside-down when she falls in love with another woman. Starring Jessica Hecht. $30. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 2 and 8, Sun. at 2 and 7. *The Public, 425 Lafayette St. (239-6200).*

Sweatshop—Janet Sarno stars in a drama by Louis LaRusso II about female sewing-machine workers attempting to unionize in 1958 Hoboken. $25–$35. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 2 and 8, Sun. at 3. *Chernuchin Theatre, 314 W. 54th St. (279-4200).*

This Is Our Youth—Kenneth Lonergan's concerns smooth Dennis, a school dropout and drug dealer; his friend the dopey and klutzy Warren Straub, who shows up with a suitcase full of his prized possessions plus fifteen grand he swiped from his remarried old man; and Jessica Goldman, a stylish and mildly promiscuous design student. A world is conjured up, captured with microscopic vision, perfect-pitch hearing, and scalpel-like penetration. Mark Ruffalo is the perfect Warren, down to his nonchalant way with his motto, "Whatever." Missy Yager is a gem of a Jessica. Mark Brokaw's direction remains exemplary, a model of underpropping without overbearing. And when the comedy eventually turns serious, the transition is flawless and shattering. (Simon: 11/16/98.) $40. Tues. and Thurs.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sun. at 7, Sat. and Sun. at 2. Through 12/20. *Second Stage Theatre, 2162 Broadway, at 76th St. (787-3392).*

Tony 'n' Tina's Wedding—A wedding at *St. Luke's Church, 308 W. 46th St.*, then a reception at *Vinnie Black's Vegas Room, Hotel Edison, 221 W. 46th St.*, with Italian buffet, champagne, and wedding cake. Wonderfully tacky—and it's lasted longer than a lot of real marriages. $65–$75. Thurs.–Sat. at 7, Sun. at 2. Opened: 2/6/88. *(239-6200).*

Waiting for Godot—This is Classic Stage Company doing what it does best—Beckett—and with a first-rate cast. John Turturro plays Estragon, Christopher Lloyd plays Pozzo, and Tony Shalhoub plays Vladimir. Directed by Andrei Belgrader. $25–$33. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sun. at 3. *Classic Stage Company, 136 E. 13th St. (677-4210).*

Wit—Can a play be made out of the last hours of a professor of literature dying of ovarian cancer? A play that hinges on a close reading of Donne's *Holy Sonnets*? That, without slighting its seriousness, sees the comedy in dying? No? Think again: Margaret Edson has managed it and more. It is a dazzling and humane play you will remember till your dying day, and especially then, thanks also to a near-flawless production. First, Kathleen Chalfant, a Vivian Bearing of power and vulnerability, commanding intelligence and compelling irony. Add a supporting cast in which all shine. For this play alone, Edson should be handed the Harvard English department. (Simon: 9/28/98.) $25. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 3 and 8, Sun. at 3. *MCC Theater, 120 W. 28th St. (727-7765).*

Woody Guthrie's American Song—A musical inspired by and featuring the songs of the legendary folk singer. Conceived and directed by Peter Glazer, son of Tom, who often performed with Guthrie; starring a cast of five musical-theater veterans, including Ernestine Jackson and James J. Stein Jr. $35. Wed.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. *Theatre 3, 311 W. 43rd St. (279-4200).*

Zora Neale Hurston—A revival of Laurence Holder's 1990 hit about the author, social critic, and queen of the Harlem Renaissance. $15–$35. Tues., Wed., Thurs. and Sat. at 2, Thurs.–Sat. at 8, Sun. at 3. Through 12/13. *American Place Theatre, 111 W. 46th St. (239-6200).*

Off-Off Broadway

Baby Redboots' Revenge—An encore presentation of Philip-Dimitri Galas's ode to a doomed child-star, destined forever to life in a polka band. $12. Thurs.–Sat. at 10, Sun. at 3. Through 12/20. *P.S. 122, 150 First Ave., at 9th St. (477-5288).*

Brandon Teena/Damage & Desire—The Present Company revives these two gender-bending pleasers from last summer—the first a docudrama about the young Nebraska woman who was murdered for living as a man, the second a satire of gay and lesbian journalism. $12 each. *Teena* is Tues.–Sat. at 8; *Desire* is Tues.–Sat. at 10. *Present Company Theatorium, 198 Stanton St. (420-8877).*

The Eight—Harassment! Corruption! Santa's reindeer tell the *real* story about life on the North Pole. By Jeff Goode, author of *Larry and the Werewolf.* $10. Thurs. and Fri. at 10, Sat. at 3 and 10. Through 12/19. *Nada 45, 445 W. 45th St. (316-0710).*

Elliot Loves—A revival of Jules Feiffer's 1989 play about the comic struggle a couple goes through when She's introduced to His Friends. $16. Wed.–Sun. at 8. Through 12/20. *Orenda Theatre, 432 W. 42nd St. (695-0349).*

The Extra Man—Richard Greenberg's unpublished play about a frustrated writer who goads two of his friends into having an affair. $12. Wed.–Mon. at 8. Through 12/20. *Samuel Beckett Theater, 410 W. 42nd St. (414-5473).*

The Folsom Head—A retired couple begins an excavation in an Indian burial ground in New Mexico; what they unearth has far deeper consequences than they'd previously imagined. By Ron McLarty. $25. Thurs.–Mon. at 8. Through 12/21. *Currican Theatre, 159 W. 29th St. (736-2533).*

The Goof Family Christmas Special—A clown show that spoofs every cloying holiday chestnut: *A Christmas Carol, The Nutcracker, It's a Wonderful Life.* $15. Wed.–Sun. at 7:30. Through 12/13. *Arclight Theatre, 152 W. 71st St. (591-0028).*

Loot—Joe Orton's soot-black comedy about a fellow who hides his mother's corpse in the closet, in order to hide some stolen cash in her coffin. Performed by Cocteau Rep. $12–$30. Thurs.–Sat. at 8, Sun. at 3, some Weds. at 8. Through 2/12. *Bouwerie Lane Theatre, 330 Bowery (677-0060).*

Morning, Noon & Night—Spalding Gray returns with his work-in-progress, still in progress, about 24 hours in his newly anchored (but still neurotic) life. $20. Mon. at 8. Through 12/21. *P.S. 122, 150 First Ave., at 9th St. (477-5288).*

No One Knows How—Pirandello's play about the punishment a man seeks for sleeping with his best friend's wife. $12. Wed.–Sat. at 8, Sun. at 3. *John Houseman Theatre, 450 W. 42nd St. (917-734-7009).*

Snakebit—The playwriting début of David Marshall Grant, who did a memorable star turn as Joe Pitt in *Angels in America.* A Los Angeles social worker's life unstrings when two friends show up, unannounced, at his door. Presented by Naked Angels. $30. Thurs.–Mon. at 8. Through 12/20. *Grove Street Playhouse, 39 Grove St. (479-7304).*

So, I Killed a Few People—One of the breakout entrants from this year's Fringe Festival. Archie Nunn, convicted serial killer, has just one last request before he's electrocuted: to put on a one-man show. $12. Thurs.–Sun. at 8. Through 12/20. *Piano Store, 158 Ludlow St. (420-1466).*

Star Billing—Veteran Broadway producer Alexander H. Cohen amusingly recalls "a lifetime of theatrical memories and the people who made them intolerable." $20. Sun. at 7 and Mon. at 8. Through 1/4. *Douglas Fairbanks Theatre, 432 W. 42nd St. (239-6200).*

Symphonie Fantastique—Puppeteer Basil Twist dances his fabulous creations around a 500-gallon tank. $25. Tues.–Fri. at 7, Sat. at 2 and 10:30, Sun. at 5. *HERE, 145 Sixth Ave., at Dominick St. (647-0202).*

Zise Khaloymes—Folksbiene Yiddish Theatre presents this new musical about a young, upwardly mobile New York Jewish woman haunted by the memory of her more traditional mother. Written and directed by Eleanor Reissa. $25–$30. Wed. and Thurs. at 2 and 8, Sat. at 8, Sun. at 2 and 5:30. *Theatre Four, 424 W. 55th St. (239-6200).*

Ground Rules:

Except where noted, Broadway shows begin at 8 and are dark Monday. Wallet-watchers should keep in mind the TKTS booths, where discount tickets are available (for that day's performance only) to many Broadway and Off Broadway shows. TKTS booths are at Broadway and 47th St. and 2 World Trade Center, mezzanine level; call 212-768-1818 for more info. Involved in a production and want to submit details for a possible listing? Call 212-508-0740.

Photograph by Susan Johann.

restaurants

Lunch at Linda's...Dough Boy...Tabaq

Manhattan

Lower New York

Alison on Dominick—An impeccably turned-out room with blue banquettes and tender lighting. Perfectionist owner Alison Becker Hurt makes sure that all is well. *38 Dominick St., nr. Hudson St. (727-1188). (E) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Bo Ky—This very basic Chinatown spot has been dishing up delicious noodle soups to the neighborhood since before the Mees and Tang Tangs sprouted uptown. Expect to share a table. *80 Bayard St. (406-2292). (I) ($).*

Can—This elegant SoHo canteen for the hip and the stylish excels in Asian seafood concoctions like hot-pot salmon, South Sea prawns, and seafood paradise, a mélange of lobster, clams, and scallops with a mild black-bean sauce. *482 W. Broadway (533-6333). (M) AE, DC, MC, TM, V.*

Chanterelle—Spare and elegant, virtually religious, this TriBeCa restaurant is a favorite among those who want a Big Deal. Chef David Waltuck runs a grand kitchen—seafood sausage, cold fruit soups, and anything he does with truffles in season. Wife Karen runs the front room with class and warmth. *2 Harrison St., at Hudson St. (966-6960). (E) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

The Cub Room—Fighting back from the scorching bar scene his restaurant became last summer, chef-owner Henry Meer (from Lutèce)—doing penance for the butter and cream of the past—is dishing up contemporary American fare to an impossibly diverse crowd. Yes, that was Ethan Hawke. *131 Sullivan St., at Prince St. (677-4100). (M) AE, MC, V.*

Diva—Another hip spot at the nexus of a hip neighborhood, with Italian specialties like homemade gnocchi and lobster-stuffed black ravioli. Iron candelabras and scarlet walls set the perfect sexy downtown mood. *341 W. Broadway, nr. Broome St. (941-9024). (M) AE, MC, V.*

Ecco—A beacon in the wilderness that is Chambers Street. Old-world charm and an excellent seasonal antipasto offering. The very cozy narrow booths line the east wall, and tile floors take you back to the Gilded Age. *124 Chambers St., nr. Sixth Ave. (227-7074). (M) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Gigino Trattoria—The rustic Italian fare in this barnlike TriBeCa trattoria ranges from brick-oven pizza and calzones to salmon with broccoli rabe. The casual atmosphere and fresh, inventive peasant food have already gained a loyal neighborhood following. *323 Greenwich St. (431-1112). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

The Independent—From the minute it opened, this tavernesque TriBeCa duplex has been a favorite of the fashionable neighborhood. The creative American bistro fare includes an acclaimed roasted garlic-lemon chicken with spinach and mashed potatoes, barbecued pork ribs, and crab cakes enhanced with equal measures of cod and scallops. *179 W. Broadway (219-2010). (M–E) AE, MC, V.*

Kelley and Ping—The type of funky, lofty noodle house that could only exist—and thrive—in SoHo. *127 Greene St., nr. Prince St. (228-1212). (I–M) AE, MC, V.*

L'Ecole—This modern French bistro is unique in that its chefs are students from the French Culinary Institute. Special prix fixe menus are available, so come with either an empty stomach or a doggie bag. Private parties. Closed Sundays. *462 Broadway, at Grand St. (219-3300). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Layla—A Middle Eastern feast, complete with gyrating belly dancer, brought to you by Drew Nieporent and his TriBeCa production team. Menu highlights include crabmeat phyllo, cinnamon-braised lamb shank with okra, and toasted couscous and almond ice milk. *211 W. Broadway, at Franklin St. (431-0700). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Manhattan Bistro—SoHo charm without SoHo attitude. This cheerful, comfortable bistro offers hearty Franco-American fare like cured salmon, seared tuna, and hanger steak. Open late with a limited supper menu. *129 Spring St. (966-3459). (M) AE, MC, V.*

Match—A SoHo loft space with a surprisingly creative modern American menu, a full sushi bar, and up-to-the-minute accoutrements like a D.J. and a jazz band. If all that hip posing makes you hungry, try fusion fare like wok-seared bluefin tuna with warm soba-noodle salad or spit-roasted duck with potato dumplings. *160 Mercer St. (343-0020). (M–E) AE, MC, TM, V.*

Montrachet—Owner Drew Nieporent now has five places in New York, including Nobu, Layla, Zeppole at the TriBakery, and Tribeca Grill, and another in San Francisco. But this is his baby—attractive, lively, and one of the first truly great restaurants in lower Manhattan. There's lunch on Fridays—try the Roquefort-and-pear salad—and dinner Monday through Saturday. *239 W. Broadway, nr. White St. (219-2777). (E) AE only.*

Morton's of Chicago—The second New York location of the national steakhouse chain. Portions are huge, quality is consistent, and, in case you haven't noticed, beef is back. *90 West St. (732-5665). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Nobu—The great Nobu Matsuhisa—actually, he's young, good-looking, and incredibly hip—has arrived in TriBeCa. And New Yorkers haven't tasted Japanese cooking like this—unless, of course, they've visited Matsuhisa's restaurant in L.A. *105 Hudson St. (219-0500). (E) AE, MC, V.*

The Odeon—Downtown has fallen in love all over again with this TriBeCa institution. The bar's out of Dashiell Hammett, and the dining room gets everyone from the banker, his wife, and their 2-year-old to movie stars, artists, and assorted big-deal celebrities. *145 W. Broadway, nr. Thomas St. (233-0507). (M) AE, MC, V.*

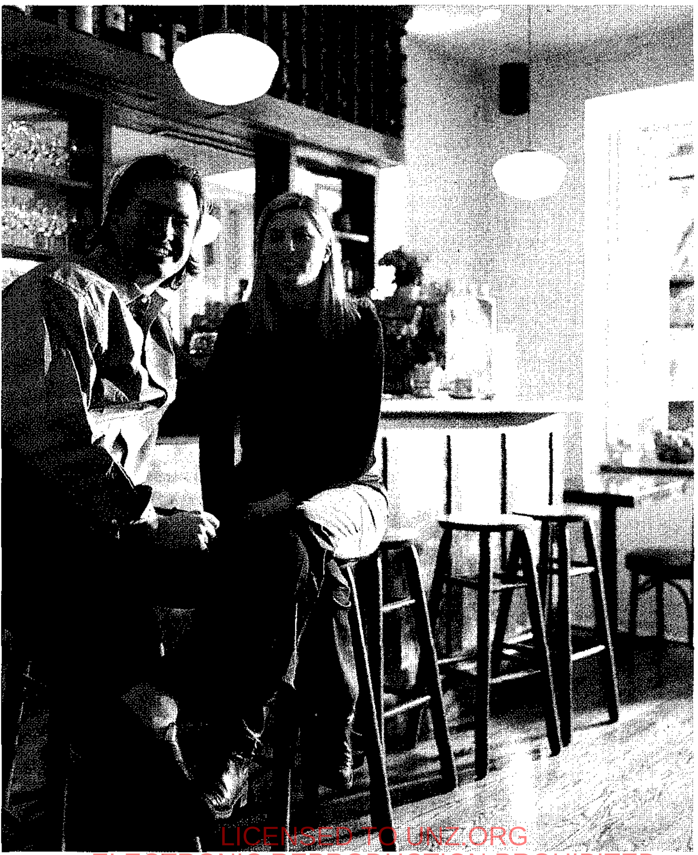
Pierino—An Italian dining room full of businesspeople and city politicians for lunch and dinner for the bankers on their way uptown offering meta-traditional dishes like lobster and steak. Yes, that was Peter Vallone. *107 Reade St. (513-0610). (M) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Provence—Lots of people have got engaged in the charming garden at this authentic country French restaurant; even more have sampled the bourride, bouillabaisse, and bass flambé. If you can't actually make it to the Côte d'Azur, this is the next best thing. *38 MacDougal St. (475-7500). (M–E) AE.*

Raoul's—The dull roar in this cave-like bistro—aging gracefully amid the high-strung Thoroughbreds of SoHo's restaurant racetrack—is a

Opening
Sandwich Bored?

Then try 'ino, an adorable storefront wine bar and Italian sandwich shop where partners Jason Denton and Jennifer Gripenberg—formerly the manager of Pó and the hostess at Liam, respectively—turn out luscious grilled panini, bruschetta, and tramezzini (crustless sandwiches), all made on Blue Ribbon Bakery bread. Wines come by the glass or half-carafe, the creamy mozzarella from the landmark Joe's Dairy. At a blessedly bagel-and-muffin-free breakfast, the bruschetta is topped with eggs and fontina, pancetta or asparagus. (21 Bedford Street; 989-5769.)



Photograph by Robert Wright.

heartwarming sound. *180 Prince St., nr. Thompson St. (966-3518). (M) AE, MC, V.*

The Screening Room—You don't need to be a cineast to love this cool, comfortable restaurant, with its velvet curtains and high ceilings, but it helps. The adjacent movie theater runs a terrific program of independent and foreign films. The restaurant repertoire, however, is creative American: Pan-fried artichokes, cedar-planked salmon, and lemon-caramel icebox cake are a few of the standouts. *54 Varick St. (334-2100). (M–E) AE, DC, MC, TM, V.*

SoHo Kitchen and Bar—Grape nuts celebrate the 96-spigot Cruvinet, ordering flights of Cabernets or seven Pinot Noirs to taste and compare, but SoHo neighbors love it, too—for all those beers on tap, for the thin-crust pizza, for a glance at the game on the TV overhead. *103 Greene Street., nr. Prince St. (925-1866). (I) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Taliesin—This power dining room inside the Millenium Hilton attracts its fair share of bankers and brokers with creative New American cuisine. Sample the chef's Italian-influenced fare by ordering an appetizer degustation menu or the three-course Tuscan Tastings prix fixe for $45. Open for breakfast, lunch, and dinner. *55 Church St. (312-2000). (E) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Tennessee Mountain—This 1807 landmark farmhouse serves up huge portions of smoked chicken and grilled ribs, plus regional appetizers and desserts. Bring those breath mints and Handi-Wipes for a $17.95 all-you-can-eat on Monday night. *143 Spring St. (431-3993). (I) AE, MC, TM, V.*

Tribeca Grill—Though this spacious, brick-walled restaurant sometimes serves as canteen for the film execs (and movie stars) in offices upstairs, the creative American cuisine and lively bar scene make it a popular downtown destination. Known for its roasted meats and fish specials. *375 Greenwich St., at Franklin St. (941-3900). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Windows on the World—Chef Michael Lomonaco, formerly of the '21' Club, has landed at this landmark restaurant known for what may be the most spectacular view of Manhattan Island. His new menu focuses on sophisticated renditions of American food, including skillet-roasted bluepoint oysters with sweet shallot-caviar cream; open raviolo of forest mushrooms, pumpkin, and sage; and Maine lobster with truffles, root vegetables, and buttermilk biscuits. Be sure to take advantage of the restaurant's superlative wine cellar. *1 World Trade Center, 107th floor (524-7000). (E) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

South Street Seaport

Harbor Lights—Comfort food in elegant French-ish environs with a breathtaking view of three bridges. *Pier 17, third floor (227-2800). (E) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, TM, V.*

North Star Pub—Stocked like a London pub, frequented by Wall Streeters and homesick tourists. Fish and chips and bangers and mash just about as close as you'll get to the real thing. *93 South St. (509-6757). (I) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Below 14th Street, East

Asti—This 70-year-old Village mainstay epitomizes the concept of the singing waiter. Professional opera singers perform arias and show tunes while waiters manage to carry a tune *and* serve orders of seafood fra diavolo, Maine lobsters, and Black Angus steak. Late-night dining too. *13 E. 12th St. (741-9105). (M–E) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Gotham Bar & Grill—Alfred Portale's kitchen, with its architectural ingenuity and whimsical creativity, serves as a finishing school for the city's all-star chefs before they launch their own careers. This awesome dining temple has long been a staple. *12 E. 12th St. (620-4020). (M) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Haveli—Haveli distinguishes itself from the Sixth Street strip, for its food as much as its upscale decor. Possibly the only East Village restaurant with an *intentionally* shattered windowpane. *100 Second Ave., nr. 6th St. (982-0533). (I–M) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Knickerbocker Bar and Grill—A subdued steakhouse with vintage items on the walls—Hirschfelds, copies of the *Saturday Evening Post*, and nineteenth-century curios. A sophisticated combination of gastronomics and history. *33 University Pl., at E. 9th St. (228-8490). (M) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Miracle Grill—One of the earliest pioneers on the East Village dining scene, this comfortable Mexican cantina is especially welcoming in warm weather, when the garden is a serene urban oasis. The grilled-vegetable plate surpasses most. *112 First Ave., nr. 7th St. (254-2353). (I–M) AE, MC, V.*

Osso Buco—Popular Italian restaurant on a much-traveled Village corridor serving family-style portions of the eponymous house specialty, Caesar salad, fried calamari, and T-bone steak. *88 University Pl., nr. 11th St. (645-4525). (M) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Pierrot—Another newcomer to the East Village's United Nations of flavors, this creatively decorated bistro offers a Med-Caribbean menu in a space meant to evoke a North African carnival. Plantain-crusted calamari, duck-confit quesadilla, and yellowfin-tuna au poivre with tomatillo dressing exemplify the fusion fare. Dinner served until 2 A.M. *28 Ave. B (673-1999). (I) AE, MC, TM, V.*

Pisces—This East Village fish house is known for its offbeat, innovative use of seasonal ingredients in dishes like poppy-seed-crusted salmon with carrot-ginger sauce and pan-roasted skate with fried artichokes. The warm, woody décor and plate-glass windows give the corner storefront a cozy neighborhood feel. *95 Ave. A, at 6th St. (260-6660). (M) AE, V.*

Three of Cups—Proving that the East Village has room enough for another wood-burning oven pizza parlor besides Two Boots. The "mickey," a charred spud dripping with butter, shouldn't be missed. *83 First Ave., at 5th St. (388-0059). (I) AE, MC, TM, V.*

Below 14th Street, West

Andalousia—This relatively undiscovered Village Moroccan rightly prides itself on its roster of tagines and couscous specials. B'stilla is a standout. *28 Cornelia St. (929-3693). (I) MC, V.*

Bar Pitti—This Tuscan trattoria, with tables spilling out onto the sidewalk, has simpler, cheaper food than Da Silvano next door, but it's just as good a spot to sip an espresso and watch the Village foot traffic. Great fettunta. *268 Sixth Ave., nr. Bleecker St. (982-3300). (I–M) ($).*

Blue Note Jazz Club and Restaurant—Should you develop an appetite while listening to some of the world's best jazz acts, this famous Village club offers a full menu, with such Continental fare as shrimp with scallops and salmon with champagne sauce. Open for brunch, too. *131 W. 3rd St. (475-8592). (M–E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Boxers—A lively neighborhood American bistro on a heavily trafficked corner of Sheridan Square. The giddy bar scene brings them in, and the high-spirited frenzy and good food keep them coming back. (A newer uptown branch offers a similar menu of American classics like chicken potpie and grilled steaks and burgers, and is decorated with a similar canine motif.) *190 W. 4th St. (633-2275). Also, 1152 First Ave., at 63rd St. (688-9663). (I) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, TM, V.*

Da Silvano—Trattoria with tables out front converts this thoroughfare into a people promenade. Great food and views of the local color. Yes, that was Anna Wintour. *260 Sixth Ave., nr. Bleecker St. (982-2343). (M) AE, MC, V.*

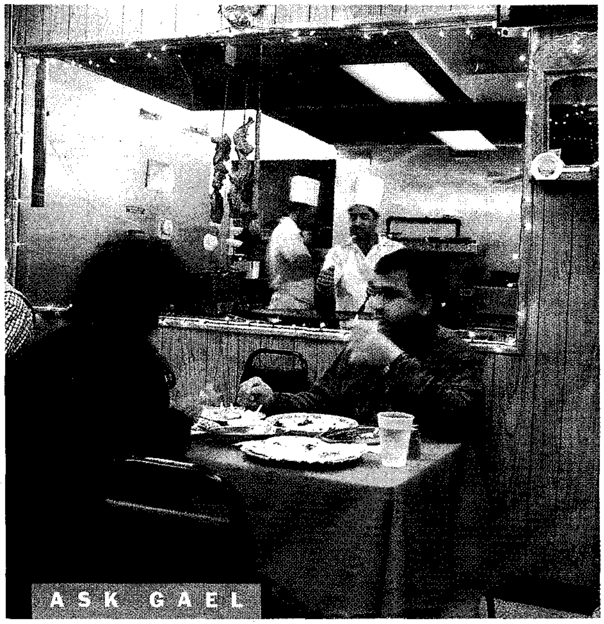
Greenwich Cafe—This Village café, with its plush antique wing chairs and rococo mirrors, has a loungy feel and is open around the clock with a menu that crosses every border. Representative items include crab cakes with lobster sauce and fennel tempura, grilled salmon with jasmine rice, and a veggie burger with minted couscous. No cover for the jazz brunch. *75 Greenwich Ave. (255-5489). (I–M) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Gus' Place—This welcoming Greek taverna in the West Village offers authentic Mediterranean meze and entrées; French doors open out onto warm evenings. The orzo with Gulf shrimp and the lamb-shank stifado are house specialties. *149 Waverly Pl. (645-8511). (M) AE, DC, DS, MC, TM, V.*

Hog Pit—This country-roadhouse-esque joint in the middle of the meat market serves, aptly enough, pork ribs, pulled-pork sandwiches, and all manner of barbecued meat. Plus fried catfish, a pool table, country tunes, and cheap beer. *22 Ninth Ave. (604-0092). (M) ($).*

Le Zoo—A West Village hot spot, with lots of Left Bank ambience. The menu sticks to standards like poulet grand mère, saumon en croute, and cassoulet. *314 W. 11th St. (620-0393). (M) AE, MC, V.*

One if by Land, Two if by Sea—Elegant Village restaurant situated within an eighteenth-century carriage house previously owned by Aaron Burr. Four fireplaces and nightly piano music enhance a fine menu of American specialties like beef Wellington. *17 Barrow St. (228-0822). (E) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*



I'll go anywhere for a taste discovery.

Is Queens too far? Desolate after a shabby meal at the fiercely lauded Jackson Diner, we decided to comfort ourselves with just a dish or two at a storefront we'd spied around the corner. That's how I discovered Tabaq and its cheap and sensational Pakistani Tawa cast-iron cooking. From the first bite of $3 and $4 appetizer kababs—shami (beef and lentils) and chapli khyberi (spicy ground beef with cilantro, frontier-style)—I knew we'd stumbled onto a find worth the detour. Suddenly we were hungry again, reveling in chicken katakat, caramelized on the giant metal griddle, with sides of chickpeas, okra, brown rice, and wonderful nan. I can't wait to go back for sizzling brains and seared mutton chops with kidney. (73-21 37th Road; 718-898-2837.)

Photograph by Warren Salowe.

Ground Rules:

Here lie a few hundred of the city's more noteworthy restaurants, some *New York* advertisers among them. The price guide, admittedly imperfect, is as follows: (E) = expensive, $35 and over per place; (M) = moderate, $15–$30 per place; (I) = inexpensive, $15 and under per place.

Following each listing there is also a code indicating acceptable methods of payment: ($) = cash only, AE = American Express, CB = Carte Blanche, DC = Diners Club, DS = Discover, M = MasterCard, TM = Transmedia, V = Visa. "AE only" indicates that American Express is the only accepted charge/credit card.

14th–42nd Streets, East Side

Alva—Bare lightbulbs evoke Thomas Edison, the namesake of this sleek spot invented by Charles Palmer and designer Fernando Saralegui, but the food is all very twentieth-century: crispy shrimp cocktail, cod-and-salmon cakes, veal stew, an exciting cheese course. *36 E. 22nd St. (228-4399). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

An American Place—This venerable midtown spot is to New York as Chez Panisse is to Berkeley. With his eclectic American menu, Larry Forgione made the national cuisine interesting again. *2 Park Ave., at 32nd St. (684-2122). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Angelo & Maxie's Steakhouse—This luxurious new steakhouse serves enormous portions of beef—plus alternatives for artery-watchers—to a crowd that's come to have a good, gluttonous time. Many choose to follow their meal with a leisurely smoke, which they're welcome to procure in the well-stocked cigar store. *233 Park Ave. So., at 19th St. (220-9200). (M–E) AE, MC, V.*

Bolo—There's nothing discreet about Bobby Flay's neo-Spanish cooking. In a room that reminds you of Gaudí by way of Pee-wee Herman, Flay turns out fiery, bold dishes like oven-roasted mushrooms with goat cheese and chili oil as well as paella with curried shellfish and chicken. We *love* the white-peach sangría. *23 E. 22nd St. (228-2200). (E) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

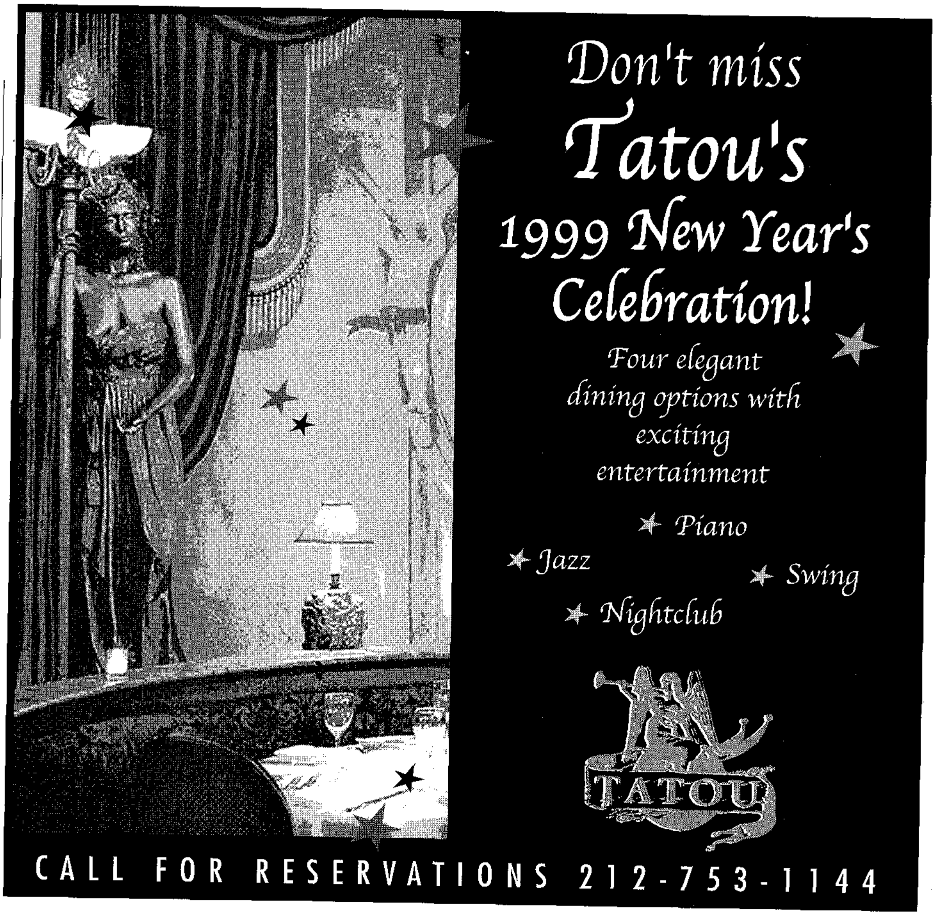
Brew's—As casual and comfortable as a burger joint gets. This two-story landmark always pleases. Great beer selection, and the always hospitable longtime owners, the Brew family, make this an oasis in the desert above 14th Street. A new attraction is a weekend brunch accompanied by live Irish music, and fifteen versions of that most archetypical brunch drink, the Bloody Mary. *156 E. 34th St. (889-3369). (I) AE, MC, TM, V.*

Campagna—The *Letterman* crowd is at one table, Time Warner honchos are at another, and isn't that . . . ? Despite the frenzy of having become Media Central, this smart little trattoria serves some of the most satisfying Italian food in Manhattan. Chef Mark Strausman is to thank for dishes like rabbit in polenta, gnocchi with wild mushrooms and truffle oil, and grilled tuna with beets. *24 E. 21st St. (460-0900). (E) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

El Parador Cafe—Very possibly the oldest Mexican restaurant in New York City, this comfortable, dependable establishment is known for its enormous selection of premium tequilas and traditional dishes like mole poblano, carnitas, and duck with cuipotle glaze. *325 E. 34th St. (679-6812). (M) MC, V.*

Gramercy Tavern—As a second act to Danny Meyer's much-loved Union Square Cafe, this Flatiron American standout doesn't disappoint. The main dining room manages to be both impressive and cozy, the service superlative, and Tom Colicchio's food inspired. For lesser appetites and lower budgets, the bar menu in the Tavern Room is equally delicious. Orchestrate your own cheese course and sample the varied selection of wines by the glass. *42 E. 20th St. (477-0777). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

i Trulli—A Southern Italian restaurant that aims to prove that tomato sauce is not crucial for survival, i Trulli succeeds with tasty focaccia, homemade sausage, tripe, and venison. In warm weather, the garden is a perfect midtown escape. *122 E. 27th*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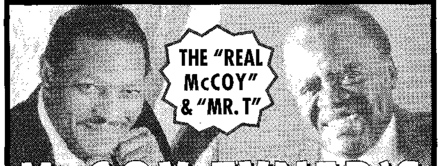
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St. (481-7372). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.

Les Halles—Even though it hasn't been around forever, this utterly perfect re-creation of a Left Bank bistro seems like it has. This is the place to come for onion soup, steak-frites, celeri rémoulade, crème caramel—that sort of thing. *411 Park Ave. So., bet. 28th and 29th Sts. (679-4111). (M) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Medusa—A lot of thought went into the décor at this new restaurant: The floors and bar are red travertine marble, and decorative ironwork details the sconces and door frames. The au courant Mediterranean menu includes such specialties as poppy-seed-encrusted tuna with lime sauce and rack of lamb with Chianti and grilled golden apples. *239 Park Avenue South, nr. 19th St. (477-1500). (M) AE, MC, V.*

Mesa Grill—Chef Bobby Flay believes in big flavors and big portions. He developed his own signature style, plundering the ingredients of the American Southwest for such mouthwatering creations as roasted-garlic shrimp tamales and ancho-honey-glazed salmon. Loud, stylish, and loads of fun, especially for those partaking of the house drink, a cactus-pear margarita. *102 Fifth Ave., nr. 16th St. (807-7400). (E) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Metronome—One of the biggest in a neighborhood known for cavernous dining. The Deco theme and American kitchen are pleasing. *915 Broadway, at 21st St. (505-7400). (M) AE, CB, DC, MC, TM, V.*

Novitá—A beautiful Flatiron restaurant with upscale, nouvelle Italian. Try, especially, the handmade pastas, which seem to have only beneficial effects on all the fashion types and Elite models who've made this room their home away from home. *102 E. 22nd St. (677-2222). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Osteria Laguna—A stone's throw from Grand Central, this rustic Italian restaurant features mostly Venetian fare. Risotto and pizza are particularly popular. *209 E. 42nd St. (557-0001). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Park Bistro—Provençal offerings prepared and served with notable agility in an intimate—sometimes crowded—setting. *414 Park Ave. at 28th St. (689-1360). (M) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Piccolino—A country-style Italian restaurant offering homemade pastas and thin-crust pizzas in a peach stucco duplex. (The building is a century old.) Worth trying are the risotto pescatore, shrimp-pesto pizza, and veal quattroformaggio. *8 E. 36th St. (683-6444). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Rodeo Bar & Grill—This place bills itself as "the longest-running honky-tonk in New York," attracting bikers, families, and music-industry insiders who come for the live nightly music as much as for the Tex-Mex grub. Try the house-smoked baby back ribs, bison burgers, and Santa Fe hand rolls, or just grab a drink at the horse trailer that's been converted into a bar. *375 Third Ave., at 27th St. (683-6500). (I) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Rossini's—This elegant split-level restaurant offers Northern Italian cuisine and live music nightly. Chef Gilberto specializes in seafood, and private parties are easily accommodated. *108 E. 38th St. (683-0135). (E) AE, DC, MC, TM, V.*

Union Square Cafe—The careful service, human-scale dining rooms, and peerless California café cuisine make this one of the best restaurants in the city. *21 E. 16th St. (243-4020). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

The Water Club—This romantic spot overlooking the East River is a favorite for formal affairs, but even your average demanding New York diner would be happy with the American menu and the airy, yacht club–like setting. As to be expected in this nautical environment, there's a heavy emphasis on seafood like lobster and soft-shell crabs, and a massive spread for Sunday brunch. Jackets suggested in the main dining room. *F.D.R. Drive via 23rd St. (683-3333). (E) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

14th–42nd Streets, West Side

Ben's Kosher Delicatessen—This casual delicatessen—the Art Deco–ish Manhattan offshoot of a Long Island chain—brings a full roster of pastrami, corned beef, sour pickles, potato latkes, and other highlights of kosher cooking to the garment district. All baking is done on the premises, and for those who hanker for something a little stronger than Dr. Brown's, there's a full bar. *209 W. 38th St. (398-2367). (I) AE, DS, MC, V.*

Bright Food Shop—A Chelsea luncheonette with an innovative, healthy Mexican menu with Asian influences. Excellent desserts and a great selection of Mexican fruit sodas. *216 Eighth Ave., at 21st St. (243-4433). (I–M) ($).*

Bryant Park Grill—This long-awaited restaurant on the edge of the city's prettiest pocket park has been mobbed from day one. Go at an off-hour for Caesar salad, New York steak, soft-shell crabs, and scallion pancakes. *40th St., between Fifth and Sixth Aves. (840-6500). (M–E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Caffe Bondí Ristorante—Popular with the photographers who work in the Flatiron district and foodies from all over who fill the garden in warm weather. Specializes in Sicilian dishes like coniglio alla stimparata, pasta con sarde, and cassata Siciliana. Open seven days a week, including weekend brunch. *7 W. 20th St. (691-8136). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Chelsea Bistro & Bar—This friendly bistro became a neighborhood hangout virtually the day it opened. Try the delicious hangar steak and lamb shank, and experiment among the 200-odd wines on the well-chosen list. *358 W. 23rd St. (727-2026). (M) AE, MC, V.*

Da Umberto—Low-key Chelsea façade belies the extraordinary Italian offerings inside. Getting a table is no small task, especially in the evening. This is a Euro–New York crossroads. A mad cacophony of laughter and chatter in Brooklynese and Roman. Don't dress down. *107 W. 17th St. (989-0303). (E) AE only.*

Simply Pasta—Perfectly situated for pretheater, this moderately priced Northern Italian restaurant offers such dependable, fresh fare as Caesar salad, osso buco, and tirami su. *120 W. 41st St. (391-0805). (I) AE, DC, MC, V.*

World Yacht—Take an out-of-town visitor to see the sights—all of them—over dinner, which could be a hearty serving of filet mignon or Chilean sea bass, topped off with cheesecake, our city's major contribution to the confectionery world. The luxury yacht boards at six, and sails from seven until ten, during which time you'll dine and dance to the music of a live band. Jacket required. *Pier 81, W. 41st St. and the Hudson River (630-8100). (E) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

43rd–56th Streets, East Side

Bice—It's always buzzing at this midtown Italian hot spot, where the fashionable crowd takes a hiatus from air-kissing to partake of dishes like lobster salad with baby vegetables, porcini risotto, and veal chop Milanese. *7 E. 54th St. (688-1999). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Caviar Russe—The owners of this caviar bar and boutique are also importers, which means that you're getting your Beluga—and golden Osetra, and Sevruga—right from the source. The petite restaurant ensconced in a midtown townhouse will gladly feed you a spoonful or a more substantial meal, like a foie gras sandwich with Armagnac-soaked figs, or steak tartare with baby-beet-and-black-truffle salad. Afternoon tea and prix fixe menus also available. *538 Madison Ave., nr. 54th St. (980-5908). (M–E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Fresco—It's a family affair: The Scottos, including broadcasting star Rosanna, have created a room where you'll find stars at your feet and hearty portions of modern Tuscan fare (rich homemade pasta, thin and crispy grilled pizza, chops, and fish) on the table. *34 E. 52nd St. (935-3434). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Giambelli 50th Ristorante—Upscale Northern Italian fare served in a warm and cozy atmosphere. The chef imports esoteric varieties of pasta from Italy to prepare his specialties; the fish and meat dishes are as carefully considered. *46 E. 50th St. (688-2760). (M) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

La Mediterranée—A cozy midtown bistro famous for its simple, well-priced peasant food. Try house specials like cold poached salmon, chilled stuffed baby lobster, and baby lamb chops. *947 Second Ave., nr. 50th St. (755-4155). (M) AE, DC.*

Morton's of Chicago—This midwestern import has taken Manhattan by storm, winning converts with its tender double porterhouse and men's club charm. Hard to believe it's a chain. *551 Fifth Ave.,* *at 45th St. (972-3315). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Peacock Alley—Under talented new chef Laurent Gras, the Waldorf's posh dining room has become reinvigorated. Known for his long association with French national hero Alain Ducasse, Gras has a special touch with foie gras and handles seasonal American ingredients with a classical Gallic touch. This is one of midtown's secret pleasures. Jackets required; harpist performs nightly. *301 Park Ave., in the Waldorf-Astoria (872-4895). (E) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Shinbashi—After nearly a quarter of a century, this elegant Japanese restaurant is still an oasis in the frenzy of midtown. Owner Fumiko Hosoda offers a traditional menu of tempura, sukiyaki, teriyaki, and sushi, plus an array of chef's specialties. *280 Park Ave., at 48th St. (661-3915). (M) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Simply Caviar—One of the newest caviar bars in midtown offers a lavish selection of caviar sampler and luxurious entrées like truffle tortellini, filet mignon in a tarragon demi-glace, and a foie gras platter. An adjacent retail counter sells caviar and other indulgences to go. Jacket required. *350 Park Ave., at 51st St. (838-3900). (M–E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Tatou—Gilded-plaster satyrs, cherubs, jazz onstage, and New American cuisine. Executive chef Neal Myers has a flair with meats and creatively prepared seafood, like pepper-crusted tuna with black bean-and-mango sauce, and crab cakes accompanied by cole slaw rolls. *151 E. 50th St. (753-1144). (M–E) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Turtle Bay Grill & Lounge—The kind of place where you kick back, light a stogie, and watch the game. Should hunger develop, there's sesame-seared tuna, Dijon-grilled salmon, shrimp pizza, and the like. *987 Second Ave., nr. 52nd St. (223-4224). (I–M) AE, MC, V.*

43rd–56th Streets, West Side

Adrienne—After extensive renovations, the elegant American restaurant in this posh midtown hotel reopens with a new look and a new, sophisticated menu. A few of the more notable entrées include a grilled turbot "chop" with cèpe jus, organic chicken en cocotte with morels and fava beans, and coriander-and-black-pepper-crusted rack of lamb from Jameson Farms. *700 Fifth Ave., at 55th St., in the Peninsula (903-3918). (M–E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Ben Benson's Steak House—This rollicking steakhouse has long fed hordes of hungry, beef-eating businessmen and the people who love them. The festive air gets pretty thick by the bar, where cigars prevail, but the dining room is entirely devoted to the consumption of standards like lobsters, crab cakes, veal, and four cuts of steak. Free validated parking available. *123 W. 52nd St. (581-8888). (E) AE, DS, MC, V.*

Broadway Joe's Steakhouse—Located in a townhouse on Restaurant Row, this steakhouse serves a fourteen-ounce prime rib but also delivers fresh seafood and pasta for the omnivore. Hirschfeld caricatures cover the walls, so come find your NINAS while you dine. Discount dinner parking. Private parties. *315 W. 46th St. (246-6513). (M–E) AE, DC, DS, MC, TM, V.*

Christer's—Famous for its spectacular selection of salmon, this Scandinavian-inspired restaurant, designed by David Rockwell to resemble a colorful, cozy mountain lodge, is a great choice for contemporary renditions of seafood. Open Sundays. *145 W. 55th St. (974-7224). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Cité—An extravagant French steakhouse, marble and pewter with blazing chandeliers, and a more affordable grill next door. *120 W. 51st St. (956-7100). (M–E) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Commonwealth Grill & Brewery—This Boston brewery import in Rockefeller Center attracts a riotous after-work crowd for its craft beers. The lunch and dinner menus feature American fare like grilled swordfish over lemon pasta, braised lamb shank, duck breast, and tuna, not to mention the obligatory burger. *35 W. 48th St. (977-2269). (I–M) AE, DC, DS, MC, TM, V.*

Da Rosina—A convenient pretheater location, specializing in homemade pasta and other casual Italian fare, like baked polenta marinara and veal scallopine. Try the $19.98 prix fixe dinner or the $12.95 lunch. *342 W. 46th St. (977-7373). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

"44"—Still the first stop for the officers of the Condé Nast empire. Deeply plush, windowless décor feels like the center of the Earth. Given the theatricality, surprisingly terrific food. *44 W. 44th St., in the Royalton (944-8844). (E) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Frankie and Johnnie's Steakhouse—The oldest speakeasy in the city. In the same location in the theater district since 1926. Try the steaks and the chops. Yes, that was Tom Selleck. *269 W. 45th St. (997-9494). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

The Garrick—Well-situated for pretheater dining, this wood-paneled bistro is decorated with photographs from Broadway productions and offers such classic French and American fare as lobster thermidor, coq au vin, and grilled-rib-eye-steak frites. *242 W. 49th St. (489-8600). (M) AE, DS, MC, V.*

Johnnie's—This small, old-world Italian restaurant has been a midtown fixture for over three and a half decades. The menu runs the gamut from basic pastas to chicken, veal, and seafood dishes; the $14.95 dinner special is a particularly good deal. *135 W. 45th St. (869-5565). (I–M) AE, DC, MC, TM, V.*

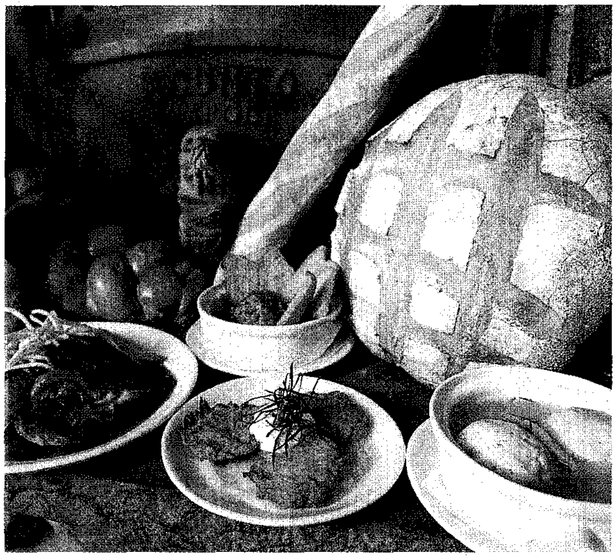
La Veranda—Northern Italian food. A popular spot in the theater district offering generous portions of fish, seafood, veal chops, and pasta. *163 W. 47th St. (391-0905). (M) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Le Bernardin—French-born Eric Ripert carries forth the quest of his predecessor, the late Gilbert Le Coze, for the world's most spectacular seafood. His ambitious signature dishes—scallops

Tasting

House of Pancakes

"The menu's already pretty Jewish," says Blue Ribbon Bakery and Cafe's Bruce Bromberg, alluding to mainstays like matzo-ball soup and the house-baked rye. This week, he and his brother Eric celebrate Hanukkah by adding traditional latkes with sour cream and applesauce and a main-course special of sweet-and-sour tongue to their eclectically secular repertoire. (33 Downing Street; 337-0404.)



Photograph by Duane Winfield.

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and foie gras with truffles, Spanish-style mackerel in Jerez vinegar, saddle of monkfish—have already won a very loyal following. *155 W. 51st St. (489-1515). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Les Pyrenées—French Provençal cuisine. Cassoulet from Toulouse recommended, as well as filet mignon and frogs' legs. A rustic atmosphere. A lot of theatergoers. *251 W. 51st St. (246-0044). (M) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Mars 2112—Theme restaurants go intergalactic at this big-budget newcomer, which transports diners to the red planet via space shuttle. The food—applewood-smoked pork chops, lobster-mango sushi, smoked-duck quesadillas—will be, for the most part, familiar to earthlings. *1633 Broadway, at 51st St. (582-2112). (I–M) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Martini's—Convenient for pre- and post-theater dining, with a buzzing year-round sidewalk café and chef Richard Krause's rustic homemade pastas, charcoal-grilled seafood, and, of course, multiple variations of the house drink. *810 Seventh Ave., at 53rd St. (767-1717). (M) AE, DC, DS, MC, TM, V.*

Osteria al Doge—Cheerful restaurant in the theater district serving fine Northern Italian cuisine, with a menu that includes fritto misto, risotto, and a variety of pizzas and pastas. *142 W. 44th St. (944-3643). (M) AE, DS, MC, V.*

Osteria del Circo—The restaurant of the moment, partly because of its excellent bloodlines (Sirio Maccioni's brood of charming sons runs the place) and partly because of its flavorful, home-style Italian menu. Be sure to try anything created by proud mother (and food consultant) Mrs. Maccioni. *120 W. 55th St. (265-3636). (E) AE, MC, V.*

Palio—Stylish midtown duplex restaurant, with a famous muraled bar and elegant preparations of Italian dishes like spinach-and-ricotta gnocchi with a vegetable ragout, and artichoke-and-marjoram ravioli in fresh tomato sauce. *151 W. 51st St. (245-4850). (E) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Pig and Whistle—This is midtown's notion of an Irish bar. A business clientele and a coming-and-going-to-the-theater crowd can find Irish specialties—both solid and liquid—here. *165 W. 47th St. (302-0112). (M) AE, MC, V.*

René Pujol—This theater-district oasis offers fine provincial French cooking in a sweet country-inn atmosphere. The conventionally familiar menu includes such specials as pan-seared duck breast with fruit chutney, steamed cod with coriander and ginger vinaigrette, and a salad of warm lobster, mesclun, and julienned vegetables. *321 W. 51st St. (246-3023). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Rio de Janeiro—Meat is back in a big way at this churrascaria rodizio, where eighteen different cuts of beef are barbecued over a charcoal pit and served nonstop, until you say uncle. Live Brazilian music Wednesday through Sunday; prix fixe menus available. *127 W. 43rd St. (575-0808). (I–M) AE, DC, DS, MC, TM, V.*

Stage Delicatessen—A landmark deli that serves gigantic sandwiches, every one of which is worth returning for. *834 Seventh Ave., nr. 54th St. (245-7850). (I) AE, MC, V.*

Tapika—Chef David Walzog's spicy cooking has transformed a formerly subdued space into a lively canteen with his version of haute Southwestern. Try the black-bean purée with chorizo and garlic flatbread or the grilled rabbit loin with cilantro oil and habanero sauce. The bar has its own snack menu and a super selection of microbrews and tequilas. *950 Eighth Ave., at 56th St. (397-3737). (M–E) AE, MC, TM, V.*

Tennessee Mountain Restaurant & Saloon—The midtown offshoot of a SoHo rib joint, this much larger duplex restaurant serves an extensive southern barbecue menu, which is also available for on-and-off-premises catering. Cigar smokers even have their own designated space in which to unmolestedly exhale. The barbecued and hickory-smoked ribs have already made a major impression on Manhattan meat-lovers. *121 W. 45th St. (869-4545). (I–M) AE, DC, MC, TM, V.*

57th–60th Streets

Fifty Seven Fifty Seven—The country's entertainment-industry glitterati make themselves right at home in I. M. Pei's monumental dining room. Susan Weaver is one of the only working chefs to combine contemporary presentation and technique with classic Provençal on one plate. The weekend bar scene puts the concept-hotel bar scene to shame. *57 E. 57th St. (758-5700). (E) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Les Célébrités—Plush and elegant, this Art Deco dining room in the Essex House on Central Park South also happens to have a very fine kitchen, turning out dishes like pyramid of tuna tartar and grilled tuna, and roasted lobster with vanilla bean and lemon pasta. And the artwork on the walls is by some very high-profile, and surprising, nonprofessionals. Dinner only; jacket required. *155 W. 58th St. (484-5113). (E) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, V.*

The Manhattan Ocean Club—Savor your seafood in an elegant dining room decorated with Picasso ceramics and Brazilian-red-cherry floors. *57 W. 58th St. (371-7777). (E) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Nirvana—The only Indian restaurant with a superb fifteenth-floor-view of Central Park and a varied menu of Bangladeshi and Pakistani specialties. Sample from a selection of curries, kormas, biryanis, kababs, tandooris, and vegetarian dishes. *30 Central Park So. (486-5700). (M) AE, MC, TM, V.*

Rosa Mexicano—Did someone say "fresh-pomegranate margarita"? Yes, someone did. What's more, this spot prepares your guacamole tableside (a south-of-the-border hibachi?). Some of the tastier gourmet Mexican in the city. *1063 First Ave., at 58th St. (753-7407). (M) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

San Domenico—Toques off to owner Tony May, who may have done more for the cause of serious Italian cooking in New York than any other single restaurateur. His dining room is formal, and the food is wonderful. *240 Central Park So. (265-5959). (E) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Above 60th Street, East Side

Boxers—This uptown outpost of the Greenwich Village Boxers has a similar menu of American staples like chicken potpie, burgers, and steaks. This spot, in the shadow of the Queensboro Bridge, enjoys the distinction of being one of the birthplaces of the Upper East Side swinging singles scene. In fact, the Tom Cruise vehicle *Cocktail* was filmed on the premises. *1152 First Ave., at 63rd St. (688-9663). (I) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, TM, V.*

Campagnola—This comfortable Italian spot has been a neighborhood favorite for over a dozen years, thanks in part to host Salvatore's warm welcome. Of course, the flavorful country-style food—Italian bouillabaisse with lobster, double-cut veal chops with wild mushrooms, antipasto—is equally endearing. *1382 First Ave., at 74th St. (861-1102). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Club Macanudo—This plush, elegant shrine to cigar-smoking also offers, besides an astonishing selection of smokes, a sophisticated variety of edibles. The American menu, listing such offbeat items as warm lobster enchiladas and pork loin with coffee-barbecue sauce, takes inspiration from Latin and Caribbean cuisines. Jackets required. *26 E. 63rd St. (752-8200). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

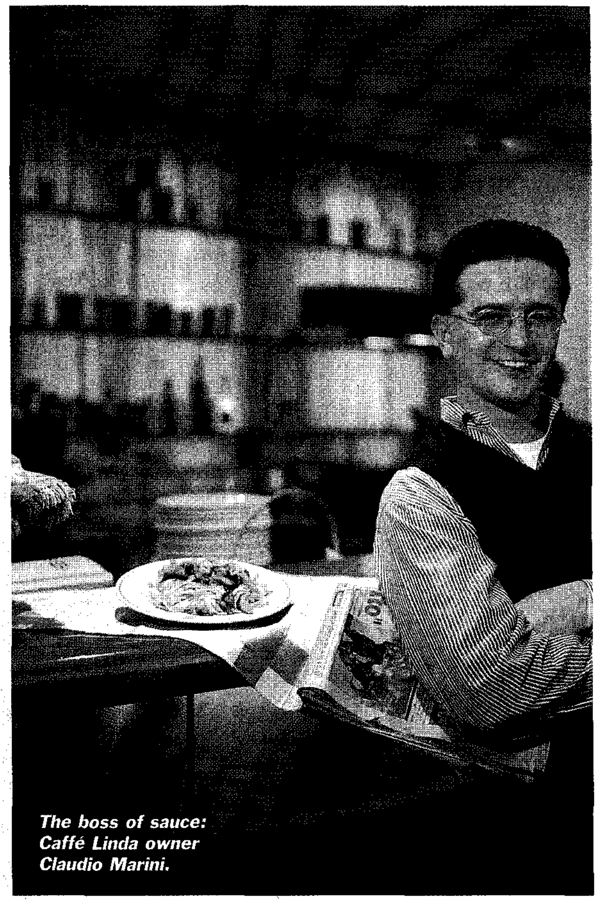
El Pollo—This Peruvian chicken joint has stuck with its simple, minimal menu, to the benefit of this otherwise barren neighborhood. Potatoes come four ways, but you can't miss with the incredible curly fries. *1746 First Ave., nr. 90th St. (996-7810). (I) AE, CB, DC, MC, TM, V.*

540 Park @ The Regency Hotel—Named for its address, this American grill at the Regency Hotel has a clubby, comfortable atmosphere. The regional, eclectic menu ranges from seared-tuna spring roll and chicken-fried lobster to barbecued duck and black-bean quesadilla. If the term "power breakfast" didn't originate here, it should have. *540 Park Ave., at 61st St. (339-4050). (M) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

JoJo—The grilled chicken with chickpea frites is a great dish. But then, Jean-Georges Vongerichten

Restaurant
Fire Down Below

The lunch canteen in Benetton's basement, which used to be a branch of Pepe Rosso, has been winningly reborn as Caffé Linda. A multilingual holiday-shopping crowd still partakes of the same tasty sandwiches, salads, and biscotti, but the construction of an actual kitchen has made way for a dozen top-notch, made-to-order, perfectly al dente pastas. Penne carbonara, rigatoni with succulent eggplant and aged ricotta, and pesto-laced pappardelle are standouts. Open 10 A.M. *to 6* P.M.*; cash only. (597 Fifth Avenue, near 48th Street; 891-0339.)*



The boss of sauce: Caffé Linda owner Claudio Marini.

Photograph by Joe Fornabaio.

doesn't make many mistakes in this elegant, jewel-like dining room situated on two floors of an East Sixties townhouse. Lunch upstairs, overlooking the street, is especially lovely. *160 E. 64th St. (223-5656). (E) AE, MC, V.*

La Soirée d'Asie—The family behind this graciously elegant Vietnamese restaurant on one of the Upper East Side's most charming blocks has already established a stronghold in Connecticut. The Manhattan branch is more upscale, but serves a similar mix of classic and contemporary dishes like spring rolls, curries, and special soups. *156 E. 64th St. (421-7899). (E) AE, MC, V.*

Nino's—Elegant Italian with a romantic mural garden and nightly live entertainment. Try the grilled dishes—tuna on a bed of balsamic onions, double-cut veal chop—or the lobster fra diavolo. *1354 First Ave., nr. 72nd St. (988-0002). (E) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Orienta—This pretty room on the Upper East Side has become a popular meeting spot for the young and the stylish. Asian accents in the décor reflect the (mostly Vietnamese) Pan-Asian fare. Chicken satay, spring rolls, tuna sashimi, and dumplings are indicative of the menu's range. *205 E. 75th St. (517-7509). Also, 470 Sixth Ave., nr. 11th St. (243-2222). (M) AE, DS, V.*

Park Avenue Cafe—A polished, countrified American café for business lunches and off-duty get-to-know-yous in the evening. Chef David Burke makes the tired catchall "American fare" sing, and keeps the haute neighbors rapt with signature dishes like rack of lamb and his swordfish chop. *100 E. 63rd St. (644-1900). (E) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Park View at the Boathouse—This Central Park landmark has been renovated and updated with an Asian-influenced menu from new chef John Villa. Technical improvements have made it possible to keep the restaurant on the lake open all year round, though those who miss visiting it during the summer months do so at their own peril. Choose among new menu items like Gulf shrimp in rice paper roll, and Indian-spiced salmon tartare with mango and cucumber. *Central Park, nr. 72nd St. and Fifth Ave. (517-2233). (M) AE, MC, V.*

Post House—Clubby and comfortable, this handsome dining room specializes in good quality and big portions. The peppery Cajun-style steak is a favorite, especially with a side order of French fries or onion rings. There are dishes with decidedly less cholesterol—poached salmon, say, or lemon chicken—but this isn't a place to watch your waistline. Seriously. *28 E. 63rd St., in the Lowell Hotel (935-2888). (E) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Primavera—This elegant uptown restaurant serves sophisticated renditions of Northern Italian food, like baby eels with oil and garlic, and roasted baby goat. The comfortable wood-paneled room, lit with antique fixtures and filled with fresh flowers, brings a touch of luxury to the neighborhood. *1578 First Ave., nr. 82nd St. (861-8608). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Regional Thai Sa-Woy—The well-spiced, artfully presented food at this two-story Thai restaurant costs a bit more than it would at your run-of-the-mill pad thai parlor, but the peaceful ambience and elegant, antique-strewn décor may very well put you in the mood to splurge. *1479 First Ave., at 77th St. (744-6374). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Sel & Poivre—Stanching the flow downtown for bistro fare. Regulars find what they are looking for in this quaint, countrified space. The country-French cuisine includes specialties like steak au poivre, bouillabaisse, and roasted chicken, and the prix fixe menus are a bargain. *853 Lexington Ave., nr. 64th St. (517-5780). (M) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Vermicelli—The décor of this restaurant is meant to evoke a much milder version of the Vietnamese jungle, with birdcage fixtures and a bamboo bar. Try the crispy shrimp rolls, cracked lobster with a ginger-scallion-and-honey sauce, or the grilled pork chop. *1492 Second Ave., nr. 77th St. (288-8868). (I) AE, MC, V.*

Above 60th Street, West Side

Cafe des Artistes—A smartly run, wonderfully romantic bistro with frolicking nudes on the walls. Open and serving all the time. Stop in before or after a jaunt to Lincoln Center. *1 W. 67th St. (877-3500). (M–E) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Gabriela's—Real Mexican food. Don't come here for bulging burritos, but for fragrant chicken soup, steamed tamales that taste like corn, and tender pork marinated in Seville orange juice and spices. Try the *licuados*, fruit shakes, and the *aguas frescas*, fresh-fruit drinks, to cool off. *685 Amsterdam Ave., at 93rd St. (961-0574). (I–M) AE, MC, V.*

La Caridad—Chino-Latino soul food in a neighborhood notoriously devoid of restaurant personality. Mammoth portions, enormous lines. *2199 Broadway, at 78th St. (874-2780). (I) ($).*

Londel's—Food cooked soulfully on a blooming strip off Strivers Row. Live music most nights and velvet rope at the front door create an ambience not often associated with home cooking. Try the smothered pork chops, but be forewarned: Everything's cooked to order—*slow*-cooked to order. *2620 Frederick Douglass Blvd., at 140th St. (234-6114). (I–M) CB, DC, DS, MC, V.*

M&G Diner—Dropping-off-the-bone short-rib sandwiches at the counter and low-key comfort. Jukebox is worth scanning. *383 W. 125th St. (864-7326). (I) ($).*

Picholine—Chef Terrance Brennan's French-Mediterranean cuisine is as beautiful to look at as it is delicious to eat. Try the risotto, smoky with tender duck and wild mushrooms, and velvety foie gras with peach coulis, and save room for a glass of port to accompany the amazingly rich and well-chosen cheese course. *35 W. 64th St. (724-8585). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Restaurant 222—Cozy and romantic, with the feel of a townhouse, Frank Valenza's top-rated New American West Sider is a luxurious surprise in a neighborhood nearly bereft of them. The menu is full of high-ticket items like Beluga caviar, Kobe steak, truffles, and foie gras, which makes the $29.95 pretheater dinner, available from 5 to 6:30, a great deal. And now, lunch is served Tuesday through Friday. *222 W. 79th St. (799-0400). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Sarabeth's—This New York institution is a homey place for upscale down-home food like chicken potpie and pancakes. It also offers a children's menu and a mouthwatering bakery counter, with homemade, award-winning jams and preserves. *423 Amsterdam Ave., nr. 80th St. (496-6280). (M) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Sylvia's—A staple of the neighborhood, with a tradition and ambience strong enough to draw loyal customers from uptown and downtown. Live entertainment that truly aids digestion. *328 Lenox Ave., bet. 126th and 127th Sts. (996-0660). (I) ($).*

Wells—A talked-about chicken-and-waffle combination. One way or another, this restaurant has been a neighborhood mainstay for nearly 60 years. *2247 Adam Clayton Powell Jr. Blvd., at 132nd St. (234-0700). (M) AE, MC, V.*

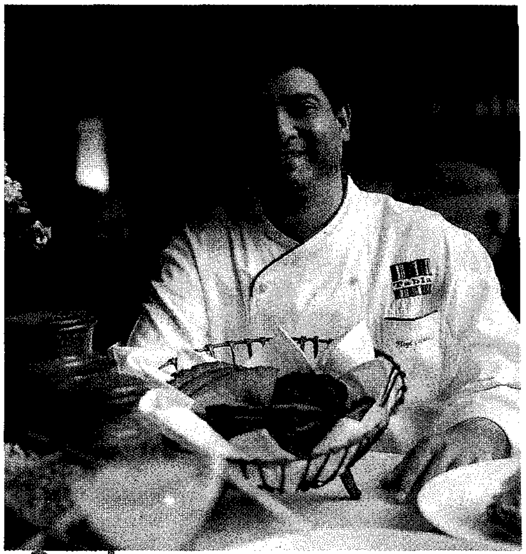
Brooklyn

Cucina—A labor of love. Northern Italian in an elegant and very well appointed room. Sensational antipasti. *256 Fifth Ave., nr. Garfield Pl. (718-230-0711). (M) AE, MC, V.*

Lundy Bros.—This restored landmark restaurant serves a wide-ranging menu of fish, pasta, chicken, and steak but specializes in lobster and other varieties of seafood. Don't miss the oyster bar or the reconstructed shore dinner. Sunday brunch buffet available. *1901 Emmons Ave. (718-743-0022). (M) AE, MC, TM, V.*

Peter Luger's—Steak for one, steak for two, steak for four, and creamed spinach. Apply for your own house credit card, or bring cash. *178 Broadway, at Bedford Ave. (718-387-7400). (E) ($).*

Two Tom's—Firehouse-kitchen ambience and a waiter who tells you what you want to eat. The double-rib pork chops are peerless, and the escarole is great, too, but refuse the mercilessly overcooked pasta when it's offered. Eat early during the week and call ahead on weekends. Regular private parties make getting a table frustrating, but it's always worth the trouble. *255 Third Ave., nr. Union St. (718-875-8689). (I) ($).*



Opening
Tabla Rasa

Danny Meyer's long-awaited Indian-inspired Tabla opens this week in the half of the spectacularly refurbished MetLife Building acreage left over from his new 11 Madison Park next door. Chef Floyd Cardoz's seasonal prix-fixe menu can be had in the upstairs dining room, but we penny-pinching carbo-loaders are most excited about the ground-floor bread bar, which, like the casual front room of Meyer's Gramercy Tavern, is strictly first-come-first-served. Such savory variations on a tandoori-oven theme as buckwheat-and-honey roti, rosemary-olive-oil nan, and horseradish taftan make fanciful bases for mix-and-match toppings like spicy grape chutney, cardamom-lamb sausage, and Cheddar-cumin-chile fondue. (11 Madison Avenue, at 25th Street; 889-0667.)

Queens

Elias Corner—Mix with the locals in Astoria as they queue up for a table at this Greek fish tavern. Don't wait for a menu; it won't come. Instead, eyeball the counter as you enter. If the offerings look like today's catch, they are. The owner fetches the fish each morning. Opt for the deep-fried, pinky-size bait fish over the squid. *24-01 31st St., at Astoria Blvd. (718-932-1510). (M) ($).*

Pearson's Texas Barbecue—Deservedly heralded as New York's best barbecue, this cozy Queens joint draws fans from much farther than across the East River. The barbecued Texas beef is sublime. *5-16 51st Ave., Long Island City (718-937-3030). (I) ($).*

Water's Edge—Every table has a view of Manhattan. A quiet and elegant space to partake of fancy American fare like roasted-chestnut soup and red snapper poached in orange-saffron infusion with baby fennel and chervil. Jacket required. *44th Dr. at the East River (718-482-0033). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Staten Island

Aesop's Tables—Arrive by ferry or bridge to this charming bistro and garden that serves inventive, bold Mediterranean fare with an emphasis on handpicked fresh seafood. *1233 Bay St., Rosebank (718-720-2005). (M) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Photograph by Jason Todd.

nightlife

Kiki & Herb Christmas...Circa Tabac

Concerts

Fatboy Slim—Bristol's favorite good-time D.J. most definitely rocks the body that rocks the party. Throwing down the most unlikely combinations (Yvonne Elliman's cover of "Can't Explain" over a super-bad disco beat, e.g.), the former Housemartin (a band in which Mr. Slim answered to the name Norman Cook) can turn even the most staid New York show into a full-on boogiethon. With Q-Burns Abstract Message and Gearwhore. 12/12 at 11 P.M. *Roseland, 239 W. 52nd St. (307-7171). $21–$26.*

"The Grappelli Legacy"—The fabled violinist of the Quintet of the Hot Club of France inspired more than a few latter-day followers, many of whom get hot and swinging at this tribute-gala. Grappelli countryman Jean-Luc Ponty, Marc O'Connor, Nadja Salerno Sonnenberg, and Regina Carter do the fiddle duties. On guitar (that is, trying to fill the daunting Django Reinhardt role) are Martin Taylor, Bucky Pizzarelli, and Jimmy Rosenberg, the 18-year-old Gypsy whose band, Sinti, showcases him as a dead ringer for his late idol. 12/10 at 8 P.M. *Carnegie Hall, 154 W. 57th St. (247-7800). $25–$60.*

"Jazz Insights: The Vocalists"—Arnold Jay Smith's weekly panel discussion continues to probe the minds of singers young and old. 12/8: Teri Thornton. 12/15: Jon Hendricks. Discussions at 7:45 P.M. *The New School, 66 W. 12th St. (229-5488). $20.*

"Monsters of Grace"—At Philip Glass and Robert Wilson's latest collaboration, audience members don 3-D glasses and travel through space to such far-flung locales as a suburban New Jersey landscape, a fire floating on the ocean, and, well, outer space. Lyrics, by thirteenth-century Persian mystic Jalaluddin Rumi, which address love and death, add to the spacey vibe—as do those unending arpeggios. 12/9–12/12, 12/15–12/19 at 7:30 P.M. 12/12, 12/19 at 2 P.M., 12/13, 12/30 at 3 P.M. *BAM Opera House, 30 Lafayette Ave., Brooklyn (212-307-4100). $15–$45.*

"What is a Jazz Singer?"—In this episode of Jazz for Young People, Wynton Marsalis, Milt Grayson, Sister Mekea, Loren Schoenburg, and others dig into the concept of jazz singing: What makes one rendition of a song "jazz" and another not? What constitutes vocal improvisation? And other mysteries the contemplation of which adults as well as children could profit from. 12/11 at 10:30 A.M. and 1 P.M. *Apollo Theater, 253 W. 125 St. (513-5300). $8 (school groups only).* 12/12 at 11 A.M and 1 P.M. *Alice Tully Hall, Lincoln Center (721-6500). $10–$15.*

Paul Winter's Annual Winter Solstice—Call it We Are the World, New Age–style. Saxophonist Winter hosts the usual multi-culti assortment of musicians, singers, and dancers for his ecumenical peace-a-thon. With Davy Spillane, Oscar Castro-Neves, Joanie Madden, Donny Golden, Sharon Isbin, others. 12/10–12/12 at 7:30 P.M. and 2 P.M. *Cathedral Church of St. John the Divine, 1047 Amsterdam Ave. (265-2624). $28–38.*

Clubland

Acme Underground—12/11: Swingin' Neckbreakers; Woggles; Carvels. 12/12: Bobfields; Plug, Spark and Sanjay. *9 Great Jones St., downstairs (420-1934). $.*

Arlene Grocery—12/10: Helper. 12/11: Booda Velvets. 12/12: Birdy; George Usher; Mary Anne Farley. *95 Stanton St. (358-1633). $.*

Baby Jupiter—12/11: In multimedia band/art project Somnaut, high-octane frontwoman Jane LeCroy speak-sings her uncategorizable poetry over a burbling sonic collage—and in front of an equally fascinating video display. *170 Orchard St. (780-0287). $.*

Bottom Line—12/14: On his recent *Klezmer Tribute to Sidney Bechet*, clarinetist David Krakauer conjured an imaginary summit between two great thirties icons: jazz titan Bechet and klezmer great Naftule Brandwein. The connection was more than arbitrary—and distinctly New York. The two, it turns out, lived not so far from one another for over a decade, turning the city's manic pulse into giddy, burbling music. Now, 60 years on, Krakauer and his band, Klezmer Madness, find a thrilling middle ground between the men's sounds, both on disc and at this live show. 12/7: Sean Altman & Groove Barbers; Accidentals. 12/8: Ed Palermo's Big Band. 12/10: Patricia Barber; Stacey Earle; Jennifer Kimball. 12/11: Tuck & Patti. 12/12: Terri Binion; Love Dogs; Marah; Carrie Newcomer. *15 W. 4th St. (228-7880).*

Bowery Ballroom—12/11: While some bands just try to make a name for themselves, the mercurial Will Oldham has a half-dozen and counting. After six years of recording liquor-and-lights-out ballads as Palace Brothers, Palace Songs, Palace Music, etc., Oldham put the moniker to rest in favor of the slightly baroque Bonnie Prince Billy. Like the inspiration for his new name, Bonnie Prince Charlie (who, Oldham notes, was a "hero of song and legend"), the singer enjoys the peripatetic life of the road. On the tour to support his new album, *I See a Darkness*, the heir to the amplified throne of Neil Young and Bob Dylan is joined by his brothers Ned and Paul, as well as by the two Virginia Stith boys, for a full-on family affair. 12/12: Buffalo Tom. 12/13: New York's Chavez blend hard-charging, metallized guitars with Beatles-pretty melodies and prog-rock tempo-shifts. Thrilling, to say the least. With lackluster indie-rock supergroup Snowpony. 12/14: Brit proto-trance-pop outfit Saint Etienne, who seem to have been hiding out for the past three years. Let's see if they've

Performance
Hot! Hot! Hot!

In "The Grappelli Legacy—Swing and Beyond," the late, great Stephane Grappelli (pictured) gets the royal treatment from latter-day jazz violinists Regina Carter, Jean-Luc Ponty, Mark O'Connor, and others. Filling the equally daunting shoes of guitarist Django Reinhardt will be hometown swinger Bucky Pizzarelli (who played with Grappelli in his later years) and teenage Django soundalike Jimmy Rosenberg. Carnegie Hall, December 10; see "Concerts."

Photograph by Don Honstein.

got anything as good as their incredible 1991 cover of "Only Love Can Break Your Heart" in their current repertoire. *6 Delancey St. (533-2111).*

Brownies—12/8: A rare night of "out" jazz at this indie-rock stronghold, with the Gold Sparkle Band and William Hooker. 12/10: Muckafurgason. 12/12: Richard "the *other* guitarist from Television" Lloyd; with soulful young badass John Carlin. *161 Avenue A, at 11th St. (420-8392). $.*

CBGB & OMFUG—12/10: Dig; Friggs. 12/11: Lubricated Goat. 12/12: Tom Tom Club. *315 Bowery, at Bleecker St. (982-4052). $.*

Chicago B.L.U.E.S.—12/7: Killer Blues Band. 12/8: L'il Mama. 12/9: John Tiven Group. 12/10: Todd Wolfe. 12/11–12/12: Hiram Bullock. *73 Eighth Ave., bet. 13th and 14th Sts. (924-9755). $.*

Connolly's—Saturdays, hometown celt-punk faves Black 47 get midtown pogoing. *14 East 47th St. (867-3767). $.*

Fez—Mingus fever and lush *faux*-Moroccan ambience make this the neo-boho place to be on Thursdays, when the mighty Mingus Big Band rocks the house, playing the works of the great, brawling bassist with a freshness and authority rarely seen in jazz today. 12/11–12/12: Loser's Lounge Tribute to Todd Rundgren. *Time Cafe, 380 Lafayette St. (533-2680).*

Irving Plaza—12/8: California neo-punkers Offspring; Unwritten Law. 12/10: Deana Carter; Michael Patterson. 12/11: Billy Bragg & the Blokes; Corey Harris. "Savoy Sundays" are weekly swingfests of ballroom dancing. *17 Irving Pl. (777-6800).*

Knitting Factory—12/9: Lou Reed has traded scuzzed-out androgyny for respectable—if gruff—elder statesman status. His new songs, though, are as affecting as anything in his career (well, almost), and the old favorites just get better. Best of all, last time Uncle Lou was here, he dropped the word "colored" from the "and the colored girls sing, 'Doo, da-doo, da-doo' " line in "Walk on the Wild Side." 12/13: On their new *Oranj Album*, San Francisco's incredible Oranj Symphonette has branched out from giddy, Lounge Lizards–esque renditions of Mancini tunes into giddy, Lounge Lizards–esque renditions of film music by all kinds of composers—from Quincy Jones to Lalo Schifrin. Party music as fine and funky as anything New York counterparts Sex Mob have gotten up to. Also 12/13: A screening of *Dutch Harbor*, a documentary whose indie-rock soundtrack should pack the hipsters in. 12/7: Oliver Lake Big Band. 12/10: Frank & Walters. 12/11: Gary Lucas. 12/12: Helium. *74 Leonard St., bet. Broadway and Church St. (219-3055). $*

Manny's Car Wash—12/8: Sean Chambers. 12/9: Jimmy Thackery & the Drivers. 12/10: Derek Trucks Band. 12/11: Jeff Pitchell & Texas Flood. 12/12: Kerry Kearney. *1558 Third Ave., bet. 87th and 88th Sts. (369-BLUES).*

Maxwell's—12/9: Dash Riprock; the Interpreters. 12/10: The Queers. 12/11: Frank and Walters; Gripweeds; Richard X. Heyman. 12/12: Stevie Moore. *1039 Washington St., Hoboken, N.J. (201-653-1703).*

Mercury Lounge—12/8: AM60. 12/10: Rogue's March; Baby Steps. 12/11: Bobby Conn; Inger Lorre. 12/12: The Pacific Ocean; Poem Rocket. *217 E. Houston St. (260-4700).*

S.O.B.'s—The city's premier world-music, reggae, and soul-jazz venue, presenting acts that could fill stadia back home and local talent that might one day do the same here. Most nights, sets at 10 and midnight. 12/11: Fulanito; Zin. 12/12: Juliana Aquino gets jiggy with her bad Brazilian self. *204 Varick St. (243-4940).*

The Supper Club—A large, grand ballroom with a starry ceiling and challenging acoustics. Fridays and Saturdays at 8 P.M., the Supper Club's house big band swings with abandon. *240 W. 47th St. (921-1940).*

Tonic—12/9: Dave Fiuczynsky's Kif. 12/12: Tamara Geechee Goddess Hardcore Warrior Soul and Psychochamber Ensemble. 12/13: David Krakauer & Klezmer Madness (see Bottom Line listings, above). *107 Norfolk St. (358-7503). $.*

Tramps—12/12: Dallas madman Jim Heath, a.k.a the Reverend Horton Heat, burns the place down with his intense "psychobilly" (as in rockabilly, but psycho—get it?) stylings. With Amazing Crown; Flat Duo Jets. 12/9: Outkast; Black Eyed Peas; Melky Sedek. 12/13: Bouncing Souls; Suspects. *51 W. 21st St. (727-7788).*

Wetlands—12/8: Jim Morrison Birthday Tribute. Yeah, man. 12/9: Jack Tripper; Super Tuesday. 12/10: Room on Fire; Michael Miller. 12/11: Budovooba; Clancy. 12/12: Inasense; Beatroots. N.B.: Tuesday night is (Grateful) Dead Night. Monday is the long-running drum-and-bass extravaganza "Konkrete Jungle." *161 Hudson St. (966-5244). $.*

Jazz

Birdland—12/9–12/12: Perhaps the greatest trio-leader alive today, pianist Tommy Flanagan returns to the scene of some of his most thrilling exploits. There was the recent run at which Flanagan brought the house down with his fearsomely brainy chops. More impressively, though, Flanagan once subbed for Bud Powell himself at the original Birdland, back in the day. Every Sunday night, Chico O'Farrill's smoking Afro-Cuban Jazz Orchestra. Every Monday night, the Toshiko Akiyoshi Jazz Orchestra. Every Friday, the Lew Anderson Big Band swings from 5:30 to 7:30. $10 minimum. 12/8: Gil Evans Orchestra. *315 W. 44th St. (581-3080).*

Blue Note—With a first-rate sound system and a decent view from every seat in the house, the "jazz capital of the world" often presents two top-flight artists in one evening. Sets at 9 and 11:30 P.M. 12/8–12/13: The warm and winning pianist McCoy Tyner, of Coltrane's classic mid-sixties quartet, continues to be a giant of the eighty-eights. He shares a double bill with tenor titan Stanley Turrentine, a hard-bopper par excellence. *131 W. 3rd St. (475-8592).*

Iridium—12/8–12/13: Rounding what seems to be New York's unofficial Great Pianists Week (see Birdland and Blue Note listings, above, and Sweet Basil, below), and a week after his drummer brother Elvin led his fabled Jazz Machine downtown, Hank Jones brings a trio in. Almost as thrilling as Flanagan (who, like the Jones brothers, is from Detroit) and as involving as Tyner, Jones is not to be missed. Monday nights, the Les Paul Trio holds office hours. Sets at 8:30 and 10:30, Sun.–Thurs., with extra midnight set Fri. and Sat. *44 W. 63rd St., across from Lincoln Center (582-2121).*

The Jazz Standard—A sprawling room with terrific sound and the best club menu in the city, the Jazz Standard offers a fresh mix of estimable hard-boppers, living legends, and hungry young comers. Sets Sun., Tues.–Thurs. at 8 P.M. and 10 P.M., Fri. and Sat. at 8 P.M., 10:30 P.M., and midnight; $10–$15 cover on weekdays, $15–$20 cover on Fri. and Sat. $10 minimum all nights. 12/8–12/10:

Performance

The Twelve Steps of Christmas

If the treacly sentimentality of the typical holiday pageant brings you nothing but a bad case of seasonal affective disorder, Justin Bond has the cure. In "Do You Hear What We Hear?," Bond's boozy, over-the-hill drag-queen alter-ego, Kiki DuRane—the singing half of notorious cabaret duo Kiki & Herb—offers a deeply addled take on Advent. "It's about Christmas," says Bond, "through the eyes of two alcoholic, dispossessed show-business freaks." "Who," adds pianist Kenny "Herb" Mellman, "have a tenuous grasp on Christmas at best." On the set list, explains Bond, are "some Christmas songs, and some songs *Kiki* thinks are Christmas songs." The latter category comprises chestnuts like "Were You There When They Crucified My Lord?" (a gospel classic), "Everybody Is a Star" (by soul-Santa Sly Stone), and Momus's "How to Get—and Stay—Famous" (which compares the crucifixion to "backlash" against "a difficult third album"). In addition to these holiday favorites, the revue features a fantasy sequence involving Kiki's "cow friend," whom the 66-year-old crooner kidnapped from the Vatican's living crèche. "She's 2,000 years old," says Bond of the divine bovine, " 'cause she was at the manger and consumed the afterbirth of Jesus and received everlasting life. Which is both a blessing and a curse." For those whose busy shopping schedules (or good taste) prevent them from making it to Kiki & Herb's monthlong run at P.S. 122 (see cabaret listings), a medley of songs from their Christmas show is being played 24 hours a day outside the "Do You Hear What I Hear" window at Bloomingdale's. Like its live counterpart, though, the retail display isn't for the faint of heart. "I was only there for a few minutes," laughs Bond. "But I saw a woman cringe and walk away." **ETHAN SMITH**

Photograph by Michael Wakefield.

Ray Vega Septet. 12/11–12/13: Allan Harris Quartet. *116 E. 27th St. (576-2232).*

Museum of Modern Art—Fridays, in addition to throwing its doors open for pay-what-you-wish night, MOMA also transforms its cafeteria into a (sort of) swinging jazz club. 12/11: Ultra-funky organ master Reuben Wilson. All shows at 5:30 P.M. *11 W. 53rd St. (708-0480).*

Savoy Lounge—Nestled beneath the Port Authority Bus Terminal, this truly funky soul-jazz joint features sawdust on the floor, cheap beer in bottles, and a Hammond organ in the corner. $3–$7 cover; no minimum. 12/11–12/12: Ray Mantilla Spacestation. *355 W. 41st. St. (947-5255). $.*

Small's—Extremely cozy and open all night, offering after-hours jazz until 8 A.M. It's a candlelit basement whose nightly jams start round about 2 A.M.—the perfect time for a post–Village Vanguard visit (it's right around the corner)—and often involve free beverages and food. Shows start at 10 P.M. *183 W. 10th St. (929-7565). $.*

Sweet Basil—12/8–12/13: Pianist Sir Roland Hanna (an actual knight—of Liberia, in case you were wondering) is a master of control, a brainy blues stylist, and an all-around stand-up guy. Sundays, Chuck Folds hosts "the original jazz brunch." Every Monday, it's the Spirit of Life Ensemble. Sets at 9 and 11 P.M., with extra sets Fri. and Sat. at 12:30 A.M. *88 Seventh Ave. So., at Bleecker St. (242-1785).*

Village Vanguard—Perhaps the world's greatest jazz club, and certainly the most steeped in history, this dark, smoky institution is revered by fans around the world. Study the photos of jazz icons, dig the curtains Miles Davis once played to, and sneak a glance inside the kitchen, an Algonquin Round Table for the bop age. Mondays, the Vanguard Jazz Orchestra swings on. 12/8–12/13: Houston Person & Etta Jones. *178 Seventh Ave. So., at W. 11th St. (255-4037). $.*

Zinno—Sundays: Joe Coleman and Bob Albanese. Mondays: Sol Yaged Combo. Tuesdays: Kendra Shawk; Frank Kimbrough; Ben Allison. 12/9–12/11: Benny Pawell; Jane Jarvis; Earl May. *126 W. 13th St. (924-5182).*

Comedy

Carolines Comedy Club—In Times Square just down the street from the *Letterman* show, Carolines hosts big names and talented up-and-comers in its wide, elegant, TV-studio-like basement. Mondays, "New Talent Night," hosted by Eddie Brill. Wednesdays, "Gemini Lounge," with the Sklar Brothers. 12/10–12/13: Scott Larose. 12/13–12/14: Mario Cantone. *1626 Broadway, bet. 49th and 50th Sts. (757-4100). $12.50–$24.50, two-drink minimum.*

Ground Rules:

In clubland, promptness is *not* next to godliness; expect shows to start much later than promised. $ = cash only.

Comedy Cellar—A physical throwback to sixties Village coffeehouses, this is the late-night subterranean haunt of many of the city's top comics. Shows Fri. at 9 and 11 P.M.; Sat. at 8:30 P.M., 10:15 P.M., and midnight; and Sun–Thurs. at 9 P.M. 12/7–12/13: Mitch Fatel; Gregg Rogell; Dave Attell; Macio; Robert Kelly. *117 MacDougal St. (254-3480).*

Comic Strip—Probably the most expertly booked club in the city, this showcase offers an eclectic mix of comedians every night of the week. *1568 Second Ave., bet. 81st and 82nd Sts. (861-9386).*

Gotham—An elegant, trendy, and palatial comedy spot in the Flatiron district. 12/11–12/12: Mitch Fatel; Jim Mendrinos; Ardie Fuqua. Sun.–Thurs. at 8:30 P.M.; Fri. and Sat. at 8:30 and 10:30 P.M. Cover is $12 Fri. and Sat., $8 on weeknights. Two-drink minimum. *34 W. 22nd St. (367-9000).*

Stand-up New York—Robin Williams is known to drop by here unannounced to warm up for his *Letterman* appearances. Cover is $7–$12. Shows: Sun.–Thurs. at 7 and 9; Fri.–Sat. at 7, 9, and 11:30 P.M. 12/11–12/12: Joe Matarese; Mike Estime; Greg Carey; Rich Ceisler; Eric Kornfeld. 12/31: Mike Estime; Sue Costello; William Stephenson; Eric Kornfeld; Greg Carey. *236 W. 78th St. (595-0850).*

Cabaret

Algonquin Hotel—Fresh from a major overhaul, the Oak Room hosts some formidable names in its cozy environs. Through 1/2: Andrea Marcovicci (early shows Tues–Sat., late shows Fri. and Sat.). 12/21: Frank Rich; Al Hirschfield. *59 W. 44th St. (840-6800).*

Asti—Singing-waiter frolics, with an emphasis on opera and operetta, are the keynote of this Village landmark. Late dining. *13 E. 12th St. (741-9105).*

Cafe Carlyle—Through December, Bobby Short is in for his annual six-week run. Every Monday, Woody Allen swings through the early set with Eddy Davis & His New Orleans Jazz Band. Sets at 8:45 and 10:45 P.M. $50 ($25 for Davis's late, Woody-free set); no minimum. *Carlyle Hotel, Madison Ave. at 76th St. (744-1600).*

Eighty-Eight's—A West Village venue whose unassuming façade conceals a top-notch little theater within. Wednesdays through 12/9: Vicki Sue Robinson. 12/11: Tom Andersen. Shows start at 8 P.M. $15, with a two-drink minimum. *228 W. 10th St. (924-0088).*

FireBird Café—The theater district's newest post-show snuggery, right next door to an overwrought Russian restaurant—steer clear of the Cossack-dagger-toting doormen and you'll be fine. Tues.–Thurs., sets at 9 P.M. Fri. and Sat., sets at 9 and 11 P.M. $30 cover; two-drink minimum. Through 12/12: Angela LaGreca. 12/15–12/17: Natalie Gamsu's Karizmatik! 12/18–1/2: Loy Reams. *363 W. 46th St. (586-0244).*

Kiki & Herb—The drag-cabaret duo presents its way-over-the-top Christmas pageant "Do You Hear What We Hear?" (See box, page 101.) Fridays and Saturdays at 11 P.M. 12/4–1/3. *P.S. 122, 225 Lafayette St. (625-3344). $12.*

Michael's Pub—Julie Wilson's standing-room-only show has been extended into an open-ended run. Mondays, the New Orleans Funeral and Ragtime Orchestra plays for the 28th year running. Sets at 9 and 11 P.M. $25 cover, Tues.–Thurs.; $30 cover Fri.–Sat. $15 cover, Mon. $15 minimum all week. *The Park Restaurant, 109 E. 56th St. (758-2272).*

Rainbow and Stars—Romance, prewar charm, and wood paneling, hundreds of feet above midtown. Tues.–Thurs. at 8:30; Fri.–Sat. at 8:30 and 11 P.M.; seating for dinner is at 6:30 P.M. $40 cover. 12/8–12/12: Darlene Love. *30 Rockefeller Plaza, 65th floor (632-5000).*

Sardi's—Thursdays through 12/17, Mark Nadler kicks the cabaret flavor. Fridays, John Malino's combo plays jazz standards (no cover). $12 minimum. Thursdays: Mark Nadler. $15, $12 minimum. *234 W. 44th St. (221-8444).*

Opening

Ring in the (Sort of) New

Now that the cigar-bar craze is officially over, tobacco-loving New Yorkers can puff their way into the holiday season at the city's first "cigarette lounge," Circa Tabac (pictured; right). Further uptown, this week sees the resuscitation of an eighties warhorse (no, not Limelight). Housed in the subterranean spot long occupied by the now-relocated China Club, the Ivy (left; no relation to the tony L.A. restaurant) promises fewer eighties-style thrills than its predecessor—though the new club's Caviarteria concession holds a certain Gordon Gekko appeal. (Circa Tabac, 32 Watts Street, 941-1781; Ivy, 2130 Broadway, 579-1000.)

Photographs by Evan Kafka.

in concert

The New York Philharmonic Does Gershwin

Classical Music

Tuesday, December 8

New York Philharmonic—Performs an all-Strauss program, with soprano Deborah Voigt and horn player Philip Myers. Kurt Masur, conductor. *Avery Fisher Hall, Lincoln Center (721-6500), at 7:30; $14–$73.*

Brooklyn Philharmonic—Performs a semi-staged concert of Thomas Adès's opera *Powder Her Face,* with soloists Heather Buck, Allen Schrott, Trevor Smith, and Maire O'Brien. Robert Spano, conductor. *Majestic Theater, Brooklyn Academy of Music (718-636-4100), at 8; $20–$45.*

Kalichstein-Laredo-Robinson Trio—Performs Beethoven's Trio in B flat and Trio in E flat, and Shostakovich's Trio No. 2 in E minor. *92nd St. Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. (996-1100), at 8; $30.*

Gay Gotham Chorus—Performs "In Terra Pax," a holiday concert conducted by Donald Messer. *Merkin Hall, 129 W. 67th St. (501-3330), at 8; $20.*

Seymour Lipkin, Piano—Performs Beethoven's Piano Sonatas Nos. 11, 14, 22, and 28. *Sylvia and Danny Kaye Playhouse, 695 Park Ave., at 68th St. (772-4448), at 7; $20.*

Wednesday, December 9

Marble Collegiate Church Choirs—Perform "Joy to the World," a concert of holiday, gospel, and pop songs. *Carnegie Hall, 881 Seventh Ave., at 57th St. (247-7800), at 8; $10–$25.*

Kalichstein-Laredo-Robinson Trio—See 12/8.

Thursday, December 10

New York Philharmonic—Performs Gershwin's *Cuban Overture,* Piano Concerto in F, and selections from *An American in Paris,* with pianist André Previn. Kurt Masur, conductor. *Avery Fisher Hall, Lincoln Center (721-6500), at 8; $14–$73.*

New York Grand Opera Company—Presents a lecture by Vincent La Selva on Puccini's *La Bohème,* with performances of selected songs. *Weill Recital Hall, 154 W. 57th St. (247-7800), at 7:30; $25–$50.*

Brooklyn Philharmonic—See 12/8.

Bargemusic—Performances of Schubert and Brahms, with violinists Mark Peskanov and Greg Singer, violist Yuri Vodovoz, and others. *Fulton Ferry Landing, under the Brooklyn Bridge, Brooklyn (718-624-4061), at 7:30; $15–$25.*

Festival Chamber Music Society—Performs Haydn's Quartet in C major, Stravinsky's *Suite Italienne* for Cello and Piano, and Schumann's Trio No. 1 in D minor. With oboist Stephen Taylor, pianist David Oei, violinist Theodore Arm, and others. *Merkin Hall, 129 W. 67th St. (501-3330), at 8; $20.*

Friday, December 11

St. Cecilia Chorus and Orchestra—Performs Mozart's *Requiem* and Mass in C minor. David Randolph, conductor. *Carnegie Hall, 881 Seventh Ave., at 57th St. (247-7800), at 8; $15–$47.*

New York Philharmonic—See 12/10, at 11 A.M.

Saturday, December 12

New York Philharmonic—Performs Gershwin's Overture to *Let 'Em Eat Cake,* Variations on "I Got Rhythm" for Piano and Orchestra, *Rhapsody in Blue,* and other selections, with soprano Sylvia McNair and pianist Fazil Say. Kurt Masur, conductor. *Avery Fisher Hall, Lincoln Center (721-6500), at 8; $14–$73.*

Brooklyn Philharmonic—See 12/8.

Vienna Choir Boys—Perform works by Strauss, Schubert, Mendelssohn, and others. Larry Ewashko, conductor. *Carnegie Hall, 881 Seventh Ave., at 57th St. (247-7800), at 7:30; $15–$55.*

Masterwork Chorus—Performs Handel's *Messiah.* David Briskin, conductor. *Carnegie Hall, 881 Seventh Ave., at 57th St. (247-7800), at 2 and 8; $16–$75.*

New York Chamber Symphony—Performs works by Bach, Telemann, and Handel, with violinist Tamaki Kawakubo and oboist Randall Ellis. Adam Stern, conductor. *Alice Tully Hall, Lincoln Center (721-6500), at 8; $35.*

Gilbert & Sullivan: A Celebration—Village Light Opera Group, Bronx Opera, New York Gilbert & Sullivan Players, and others perform choruses by Arthur Sullivan. *Rogers Auditorium, Metropolitan Museum of Art (570-3949), at 7; $15–$25.*

Sunday, December 13

New York Chamber Symphony—See 12/12, at 5.

New York Youth Symphony—Performs the world premiere of Pann's *Rags to Richard,* Prokofiev's Sonata for B-flat Clarinet and Small Orchestra, and Brahms's Symphony No. 2, with clarinetist Richard Stoltzman. Mischa Santora, conductor. *Carnegie Hall, 881 Seventh Ave., at 57th St. (247-7800), at 2; $5.*

Chamber Music Society—Performs a family concert of "Marita and Her Heart's Desire: A Chamber Music Fairy Tale," with narrator Michele Mariana, oboist Stephen Taylor, clarinetist David Shifrin, and others. *Alice Tully Hall, Lincoln Center (721-6500), at 2; $12.*

Bargemusic—See 12/10, at 4.

Monday, December 14

Jubilate Deo Chorale and Orchestra—Performs "Night of Miracles: Celebrating the First Christmas," a concert of traditional carols. Carl J. Marucci, conductor. *Carnegie Hall, 881 Seventh Ave., at 57th St. (247-7800), at 7:30; $15–$50.*

Opera

Metropolitan Opera—Performs Bizet's *Carmen,* 12/8 at 8 and 12/12 at 1:30; Verdi's *La Traviata,* 12/9 at 8 and 12/12 at 8:30; Mozart's *Le Nozze di Figaro,* 12/10 at 8; and Donizetti's *Lucia di Lammermoor,* 12/11 at 8. *Metropolitan Opera House, Lincoln Center (362-6000); $25–$210.*

Amato Opera—Performs Rossini's *Barber of Seville,* 12/12 at 7:30 and 12/13 at 2:30. *319 Bowery (228-8200); $23.*

Dicapo Opera—Performs Donizetti's *La Fille du Regiment,* 12/11 and 12/12 at 8, and 12/13 at 3. *184 E. 76th St. (288-9438); $25.*

Ground Rules:

This section emphasizes classical concerts, recitals, and public outdoor performances (but only the premeditated ones), and includes the occasional jazz concert if it is held, say, in a public space. For rock concerts and club information, see "Nightlife."

Previews
Bedchamber Opera

The Brooklyn Philharmonic—"New York's alternative orchestra," in the words of Music Director Robert Spano—continues to push the edges of the envelope with its production of Thomas Adès's opera *Powder Her Face,* based on the busy sex life and humiliating divorce of Britain's Duchess of Argyll. In addition to using unorthodox instruments such as electric bells and fishing reels, Adès delves into the racier exploits of the "Dirty Duchess," going as far as to include an oral-sex scene. While advising audiences to "expect the unexpected," Spano doesn't think anyone will be offended by the opera. After all, who would be shocked to hear about oral sex these days?

Dance

New York City Ballet—Performs "George Balanchine's *The Nutcracker,*" 12/8–12/10 at 6, 12/11 at 8, 12/12 at 2 and 8, and 12/13 at 1 and 5. *New York State Theater, Lincoln Center (870-5570); $10–$80.*

Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater—Performs Dove's *Episodes,* Ailey's *Revelations,* Jamison's *Echo: Far From Home,* and other works, 12/8–12/11 at 8, 12/12 at 2 and 8, and 12/13 at 3 and 7:30. *City Center, 131 W. 55th St. (581-1212); $15–$55.*

Ballet Hispanico—Performs four programs, which include Oller's *Bury Me Standing,* Reinking's *Ritmo y Ruido,* and other works, 12/8–12/11 at 8, 12/12 at 2 and 8, and 12/13 at 2 and 7:30. *Joyce Theater, 175 Eighth Ave., at 19th St. (242-0800); $35.*

Dances . . . Patrelle—Performs Francis Patrelle's *The Yorkville Nutcracker,* 12/10 and 12/11 at 7, 12/12 at 2 and 7, and 12/13 at 2 and 6. *Sylvia and Danny Kaye Playhouse, 695 Park Ave., at 68th St. (772-4448); $25–$35.*

Photograph by Alex Irvin.

the mix

David Halberstam...Wendell Berry

John Leonard's TV Notes

Scandalous Me: The Jacqueline Susann Story (12/9; 9 to 11 P.M.; USA) is an inexpressibly tedious docudrama derived from Barbara Seaman's livelier biography, with Michele Lee as the author of *The Valley of the Dolls* and—why, please God, explain?—Peter Riegert as Irving Mansfield, her indulgent husband and tireless publicist, not to mention James Farentino as Bernard Geis, the publisher who cashed in on a new way of marketing what he pretended were books; Gloria Slade as Ethel Merman; Jason Carter as Stephen Sondheim; and Tracey Holt as Harper Lee. It was, of course, all her father's fault. Consider yourself warned.

Recipe for Revenge (12/12; 9 to 10:30 P.M.; The Movie Channel) features Kim Huffman as a cute caterer, Alex Carter as an equally cute cop who is assigned to guard her body while she is waiting to testify in a murder case, and Corbin Bernsen as Professor Passion, a sex therapist who shoots women when they insist on terminating treatment. But is Corbin the only one stalking Kim? And what about those female advertising executives who want Alex to take off his clothes? The pastry here is better than we've come to expect from the Movie Channel's Harlequin series.

Murder She Purred: A Mrs. Murphy Mystery (12/13; 7 to 9 P.M.; ABC) reminds us that Ricki Lake was once an actress (*China Beach, Mrs. Winterbourne*) before she became a talk-show embarrassment. As the Virginia postmistress in this Disneyfying of a Rita Mae Brown mystery novel, she depends a lot on her cat (the voice of Blythe Danner) and her dog (the voice of Anthony Clark) to solve the murder of the local banker with the prosthetic arm. There is also a talking fox, as well as horsemen in pursuit of him who include Linden Ashby, a criminal psychologist, and Ed Begley Jr., a playboy millionaire. At least it's safe for the children to watch.

Hard Time (12/13; 8 to 10 P.M.; TNT) lets Burt Reynolds direct himself as a Miami cop framed for murder, assisted in his mean-street quest for redemption by Charles Durning as his partner who's withholding information and Mia Sara as his defense attorney who seems inclined not to withhold anything at all, while among those standing in their way are Robert Loggia, doing his signature mob-boss shtick, and Billy Dee Williams, a very political D.A. While a few of the jokes pass weary muster, you've seen this many times before and almost always faster.

Naked City: A Killer Christmas (12/13; 8 to 9:30 P.M.; Showtime) brings back Scott Glenn and Courtney B. Vance as undercover cops, in a yellow cab, this time tracking down a serial killer who keeps on sending mash notes by e-mail to TV reporter Laura Leighton, who feels bad about not calling the cops before somebody else is wasted, but her evil producer, Al Waxman, makes her do it anyway. In spite of a puerile subplot involving Vance's search for a virtual buddy to give his son for Christmas, this latest update of the old TV series does have a genuine surprise twist, involving the reason why these particular victims end up so very dead.

NYTV: By the People Who Made It (12/14; 9 to 11 P.M.; Channel 13), introduced by Walter Cronkite and hosted by Al Roker—never mind; pay attention—gets Milton Berle, Sid Caesar, Bea Arthur, Tony Randall, Rod Steiger, Charlotte Rae, Jack Lemmon, Nipsey Russell, and Sidney Lumet to talk about television in what was supposed to be its golden age, back when most of it was in New York and all of it was live and they were making it up as they went along, in our very own living rooms. I may have my doubts about the cultural generalization—in my opinion, the best was yet to come—but those doubts do not apply to the entertainment value of these talking heads and such snippets as they choose to babble about.

Radio Highlights

This American Life—Saturdays at 11 A.M., Sundays at 8 P.M. 12/13: Live from Town Hall in New York, a special broadcast with sex columnist Dan Savage, Sarah Vowell, and David Rakoff on how observation and surveillance change people's behavior. WNYC, 820 AM. For tickets, call 840-2824.

The Lewis Burke Frumkes Show—Sundays at 8 P.M. 12/13: Lan Samantha Chang, author of *Hunger.* WPAT, 930 AM.

Casper Citron—Saturdays at 10 P.M. 12/12: Richard Benjamin and Paula Prentiss, stars of the off-Broadway show *Power Play;* Nina Burleigh on her book *A Very Private Woman,* about the 1964 death of Mary Meyer, rumored former lover of JFK. WOR, 710 AM.

The Written Word

Richard Panek—12/11 at 7:30 P.M.: Reading at Barnes & Noble, 2289 Broadway, at 82nd. St. (362-8835); free.

Wendell Berry—12/13 at 2 P.M.: Reading from *A Timbered Choir: Poems 1995–97.* Wave Hill, W. 249th St. at Independence Ave., the Bronx (718-549-3200, ext. 213); free, reservations required.

Hortense Calisher, Lynne Sharon Schwartz, Ann Birstein—12/11 at 6 P.M.: Reading in celebration of the thirtieth birthday of *Confrontation* magazine. National Arts Club, 15 Gramercy Park South (475-3424); free.

Dickens Celebration—12/13 at 4 P.M.: Readings from *A Christmas Carol* by Gregory St. John, with port wine and "figgy pudding." Merchant's House Museum, 29 E. 4th St. (777-1089); $15.

Amy Hempel, Francine Prose, Patrick McGrath—12/13 at 7 P.M.: Reading from new work. KGB, 85 E. 4th St. (358-1935); free.

Scott Anderson and Joy Williams—12/9 at 7:30 P.M.: Reading at Barnes & Noble, 2289 Broadway, at 82nd. St. (362-8835); free.

Edwidge Danticat—12/8 at 6:30 P.M.: Reading from her new novel to benefit The Door's program for children. Synchronicity Space, 55 Mercer St. (941-9090, ext. 334); $10.

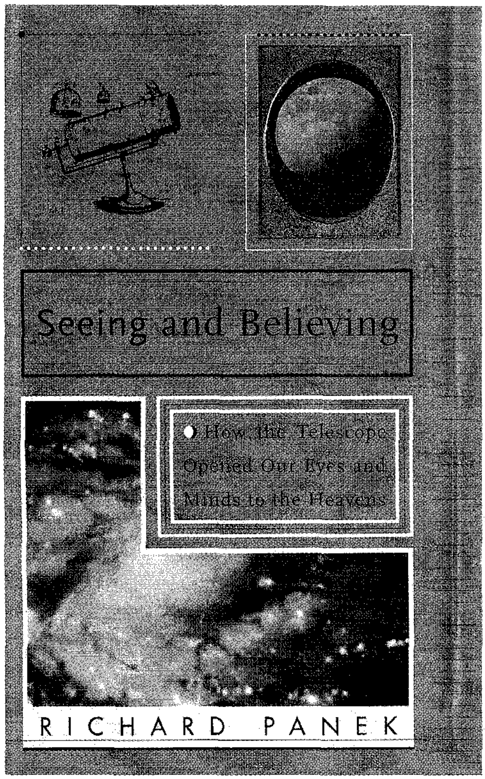
Selected Stories—12/9 at 6:30 P.M.: Actor Larry Keith reads Sholom Aleichem's "A Page From the Song of Songs"; Laura Esterman reads "The Loudest Voice," by Grace Paley; Phyllis Newman reads "Sleeping Arrangements," by Laura Cunningham. Merkin Concert Hall, 129 W. 67th St. (501-3330); $17.

Carol Maso—12/10 at 7:30 P.M.: Reading from her new novel, *Defiance.* Barnes & Noble, 4 Astor Place (420-1322); free.

Lectures and Panels

"Big Issue Round Table"—12/10 at 7:30 P.M.: A discussion between Kurt Vonnegut, Stanley Crouch, Mark Helprin, Peggy Noonan, Edward O. Wilson and Michael Malone about the impact of technology. The New School's Tishman Auditorium, 66 W. 12th St. (229-5488); $10.

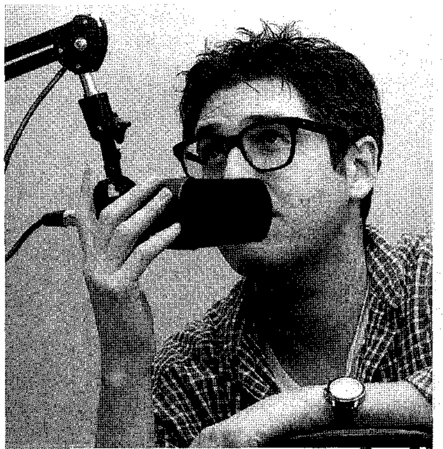
David Halberstam—12/13 at 7:30 P.M.: The Pulitzer Prize winner and author of fifteen books talks with CNN political and media analyst Jeff Green-



In Print

Eye Spy

Though you may never have had a burning urge to learn about the history of the telescope, Richard Panek's fascinating new book, 'Seeing and Believing,' brings the subject into focus and makes you want to look even further into it. Panek reads at Barnes & Noble on the Upper West Side on December 11.



field about freedom of the press. 92nd St. Y, 1395 Lexington Ave. (996-1100); $18.

Dave Isay and Harvey Wang—12/10 at 7:30 P.M.: In honor of the fiftieth anniversary of the Human Rights Doctrine, Isay and Wang will be reprising their radio documentary "Sunshine Hotel." Barnes & Noble, 2289 Broadway, at 82nd St. (877-7790); free.

"Escape From the Nineteenth Century: Chaos Day 1998"—12/8 at 7:30 P.M.: Peter Lamborn Wilson speaking about Marx, Proudhon, Fourier, Nietzsche, and the creation of an anarchist politics for the next millennium. 122 W. 27th St. (979-8353); donation requested.

Peter Matthiessen—12/12 at 5 P.M.: An evening with the author of *The Snow Leopard* and *At Play in the Fields of the Lord.* Jivamukti Yoga Center, 404 Lafayette St., third floor (353-0214); $15.

Isamu Noguchi: A Sculptor's Legacy—12/10 at 6:30 P.M.: Artists and colleagues who were close to the sculptor will discuss his art and life. Japan Society, 333 E. 47th St. (752-3015); $10.

The Status of Women in Israel—12/14 at 8:15 P.M.: Professor Galia Golan, director of the Lafer Center for Women's Studies at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, talks about the obstacles to equality for women in Israel. 92nd St. Y, 1395 Lexington Ave. (996-1100); $12.

Tours

Bright Lights, Big City: New York Aglow—12/13 at 7 P.M.: Edward Hayman and Tama Starr, authors of *Signs and Wonders: The Spectacular Marketing of America*, lead this tour of Times Square. Call 996-1100 for reservations and information; $25.

New York Underground: A Subway Buff's Tour—12/13 at 1 P.M.: A private tour of the NYC Transit Museum and the LIRR's West Side Yard. Call 996-1100 for reservations and information; $20.

Jewish Greenwich Village—12/13 at 12:30 P.M.: Tour the district once home to the Yiddish theater, Emma Goldman, and Hank Greenberg. For meeting place and reservations, call 465-3331; $12.

A Victorian Christmas—12/12 at 12:30 P.M.: A walk past nineteenth-century sites in Gramercy Park, Chelsea, and Ladies Mile associated with the holiday season. For meeting place and reservations, call 465-3331; $12.

Millionaire's Mile—12/13 at 2 P.M.: Explore one of New York's most handsome and exclusive landmark districts, with its palatial homes and prestigious cultural institutions. Meet at the northwest corner of 58th St. and Fifth Ave. (979-2388); $10.

The Mystical World of Hasidim—Sundays: A round-trip bus and walking tour during which you'll experience a Hasidic synagogue, the writing of a Torah Scroll, a library, and a kosher-deli lunch. Meet at the New York Public Library, 42nd St. and Fifth Ave. (800-838-TOUR); $36.

Foods of New York—A tour of the restaurants and specialty food shops of Greenwich Village and SoHo. Call 732-636-4650 for dates and additional information; $20.

Metropolitan Opera Backstage—Weekdays at 3:45 P.M. and Saturdays at 10 A.M.: A unique, behind-the-scenes view of the creation of the opera. Includes costume and set design, the performers' rehearsal facilities and dressing rooms, and the opulent auditorium. At Lincoln Center; call for reservations and times (769-7020); $8.

Celebrities of New York—Saturdays and Sundays at 10:30 A.M. on the West Side and 2 P.M. on the East Side: Discover the homes of the stars and the countless cinematic sites of the city. Call 683-4133 for more information and meeting places; $15.

Behind the Scenes at the Waldorf-Astoria—Every Wednesday and Sunday at 9 A.M.: Discover the history and architecture of New York's Art Deco landmark hotel, where Guy Lombardo celebrated New Year's in style and Cole Porter wrote his tunes. Call 872-4790 for further information; $25.

Benefits

In Celebration of Writers—12/8 at 6 P.M.: The Poets & Writers, Inc. annual gala dinner, honoring Edward Albee, E. L. Doctorow, and Susan Sontag for their commitment to supporting other writers. The Puck Building, 243 Lafayette Street (226-3963); $500–$25,000.

Events

Nineteenth-Century Holiday Party—12/9 at 6 P.M.: Music, food, drink, and tours of the museum. Merchant's House Museum, 29 E. 4th St. (777-1089); $20.

Media D'Arte Designer Arts Showcase—12/11–12/13: 320 exhibits of jewelry, clothes, painting, photography, sculpture, wood, clay, and glass. Gramercy Park Armory, 26th St. and Lexington Ave. (800-660-1045); $6.

Wendy Christmas Antiques Show—12/9–12/13: 100 dealers from around the world bring their lamps, glass, tapestries, crystal, silver, pewter, and furniture to Seventh Regiment Armory. Park Ave. at 67th St. (914-677-5040); $10.

Amerinda Native American Culture Celebration—12/12–12/13: Zuni Rainbow dance and Andean flute playing along with a sale of traditional crafts and foods. Friends Seminary, 222 E. 16th St. (749-2003); $6.

On Air

Life Expectancy

Ira Glass, host of the radio cult hit "This American Life," has somehow managed to become a star of the airwaves without a single fart joke or topless babe. It happened by accident: "After my freshman year of college, I talked my way into an internship at NPR, which I'd never heard of," he says. "Since then I've just been trying to find a style of reporting I can stand, and our show is the conclusion of my scientific experiment." His broadcasts range from "Scenes From a Transplant," a documentary piece on living through a life-threatening illness, to a variety show called "I Enjoy Being a Girl, Sort Of," with a story by David Sedaris about the "fatty suit" his sister Amy wore to avoid feeling like a Pretty Girl. "It's about characters being tested—a very traditional narrative form, really," says Glass. "You'd think there'd be a lot of that on radio, but there's not. Perhaps this is because when you say 'public radio,' it's like saying 'medicine.' People think 'It'll be good for me, but no fun at all.' We make it pleasurable." Feel the pleasure at Town Hall when Glass visits to do a live broadcast on December 13. He takes his show on the road twice a year for two reasons. "First, there's the sheer, cold business calculation. We don't have any money for publicity, so all we can do is tour like we're a band or something," he admits. "The other reason is purely emotional; when we do the show in our little office in Chicago, it doesn't feel celebratory. It's more like launching one of the early Mercury rockets, and you don't know if Alan Shepard is going to make it down alive or not—plus all our technology is pretty much Soviet-era. But when we tape in front of people, they actually cheer. It's absolutely shocking." See "Radio Highlights" for details. ARIEL LEVY

Exhibitions

"just windowdressing?"—Through 1/30: Photographs of storefronts and window displays, featuring the work of Gene Moore, Robert Currie, Simon Doonan, Candy Pratts Price, Tom Lee, and Henry Callahan. Municipal Art Society's Urban Center Books, 457 Madison Ave., bet. 50th and 51st Sts. (935-3960); $5.

"Bob Dylan's *Eat the Document*"—Through 12/20: The first screening in more than twenty years of a documentary that captures the madness that ensued during Dylan and the Hawks' 1966 tour of Europe, in which Dylan transformed himself from an acoustic folk singer to a plugged-in rock man. Museum of Television and Radio, 25 W. 52nd St. (621-6600); $10.

Photographs courtesy of WBEZ Chicago/This American Life.

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Happening

The art of the storefront—from Bergdorf Goodman's glamorous displays to pigs and ducks hanging in Chinatown windows—is celebrated in the exhibition "just window-dressing?" at the Municipal Art Society.

Hanukkah Project—12/13–1/31: In celebration of the holiday, a new video installation or light sculpture for each of the eight nights. The Jewish Museum, 1109 Fifth Ave. at 92nd St. (423-3200); $8.

The International Festival of Fashion Photography—Through 12/12: Two hundred photographs from some of the world's most influential fashion shutterbugs. The Angel Orensanz Foundation Center for the Arts, 172 Norfolk St. (529-7194); free.

"100 Great Ideas for New York's Future: The City That Could Be . . ."—Through 12/30: One hundred proposals dedicated to improving life in the five boroughs by local urban planners, architects, students, community organizations, and government agencies. Municipal Art Society's Urban Center, 457 Madison Ave., bet. 50th and 51st Sts. (935-3960); free.

"Eight Million Stories: Twentieth Century New York Life in Prints and Photographs"—Through 1/9/99: The 76 portraits on view record New Yorkers of all ages and social strata going through city life. New York Public Library, 42nd St. at Fifth Ave. (221-7676); free.

"Seinfeld's Diner"—Through 8/1/99: The set of the famous diner frequented by Jerry, Kramer, Elaine, and George is on display along with props and costumes. American Museum of the Moving Image, 35th Ave. at 36th St., Astoria (718-784-0077); $4.50–$8.50.

"Street Trees: The Hunts Point Sculpture Garden"—Through 4/3/99: The first installment of a semiannual collaboration between artists and community residents: sculptural interpretations of a city-street tree at two sites. Crames/Monsignor Raul del Valle Square, 163rd St. at Hunts Point Ave., and the courtyard of the Pio Mendez Houses on the corner of Hunts Point and Lafayette Aves., the Bronx (212-831-2189); free.

Sports

92nd Street Y Basketball—As the 1998–99 NBA season is looking more and more like a train wreck, why not exorcise some of those roundball demons by hitting the court at the Y? Men's basketball leagues play on Thursday nights; women's and co-ed leagues on Monday evenings. Call 415-5700 for more info.

Joe Kleinerman 10K—12/13 at 10 A.M.: The New York Road Runners Club hosts this event, which is part of the Sprint PCS Awards Series. The 10K (6.2M) race begins at 85th Street and East Drive in Central Park, which is south of the entrance at Fifth Avenue and 90th Street. Cash prizes for top finishers. Please call 860-4455 for registration and additional info.

Online

New York Magazine on the Web—Visit a new Website each weekday from "Stephanie's Surf Report" (in the "Today" section of www.newyorkmag.com). This week: Order the best in home décor online from Fancy Box; relive the glory days of Rayanne, Angela, Jordan, and the gang; take care of holiday shopping for that wacky friend or relative; go underground with urban youth at the Platform Network; and let infospace.com find the best cyber shopping deals for you. But before you leave us at www.nymag.com, check out all our other great stuff, like selected articles from the current issue and a searchable "Cue" section, plus daily picks of New York events in "Vanessa Takes Manhattan," daily deals from Angie Maximo in "Cheap Thrills," "First Words" for bibliophiles, and our helpful Subscriber Service Center.

GAME WEEK

HOME ● AWAY ●

	MON	TUE	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT	SUN
GIANTS							DEN CBS 1PM
JETS							MIA ESPN 8PM
RANGERS	TOR MSG 7:30PM		COL MSG 7:30PM		BUF MSG 7:30PM		
ISLANDERS		COL MSG 7:30PM				TB FSNY 7PM	
DEVILS		PHI FSNY 7:30PM		PHI FSNY 7:30P		COL FSNY 1PM	
	12/7	12/8	12/9	12/10	12/11	12/12	12/13

Photograph by Martha Cooper.

kids

Nutcracking...Trainspotting

Children's Events

Nutcracker Variations—The New York Theatre Ballet production of *The Nutcracker* is an introduction to the ballet for children ages 2 to 8 (see photo). The abbreviated, intimate staging has sets based on lithographs of English toy theaters. **FLORENCE GOULD HALL**, 55 E. 59th St. (355-6160), 12/18 through 12/27; $17.50, $12.50 for children. *Balanchine's 'The Nutcracker'* is at **LINCOLN CENTER**'s New York State Theater through 1/3. (870-5570); $10–$80. *The Yorkville 'Nutcracker,'* is set in nineteenth-century New York, with the opening party at Gracie Mansion, hosted by then-newly elected mayor the Honorable William L. Strong. 12/10 through 12/13, **SYLVIA AND DANNY KAYE PLAYHOUSE**, 695 Park Ave., at 68th St. (772-4448); $25–$35. Students at **THE HARLEM SCHOOL OF THE ARTS** present *The African Nutcracker: A Harvest Sojourn,* demonstrating how the seven principals of Kwanzaa bind together family, community, and culture, 12/10 through 12/13. Theater at Riverside Church, 91 Claremont Ave. (near 120th St. bet. Broadway and Riverside Dr.; 926-4100); $15, $7.50 for students and seniors.

Italian Folk Tale—Good witch La Befana searches the world over for the holy child in a production of the legend brought to life with masks, puppets, and live accordion music. 12/18 at 7:30 and 12/19 at 2. Harry De Jur Playhouse, Abrons Arts Center, **HENRY STREET SETTLEMENT**, 466 Grand St. (598-0400). Tickets are $6, $4 for children and seniors.

Harlem Holidays —In Langston Hughes's *The Black Nativity,* students at **THE HARLEM SCHOOL OF THE ARTS** celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ. 12/17 through 12/20. Theater at Riverside Church, 91 Claremont Ave. (near 120th St. bet. Broadway and Riverside Dr.; 926-4100); $15, $7.50 for students and seniors.●

Northern Lights—**SYMPHONY SPACE**'s *Christmas Revels* is set in Scandinavia this year. Seventy-five fiddlers, folk dancers, actors, larger-than-life puppets, and masked figures perform a 700-year-old song-dance (the original meaning of *carol*) and tell an ancient Finnish legend, called *The Kalevala*—about how the world emerged from omelet-ish origins. 12/11 through 12/13, Broadway and 95th St. (864-5400). Tickets are $20–$32, $10–$16 for children under 12.●

Nurturing Nature—Storyteller Jim Keyes practices "Extreme Storytelling," meaning audiences add their own wicked plot twists. Wave Hill House, 12/12 at 3 and 4. At a family workshop called "Stamp, Stencil and Roll," everyone produces cards and wrapping paper inspired by chilly scenes of nearby nature, 12/12 and 12/13 at 1 and 4. **WAVE HILL**'s Kerlin Learning Center, W. 249th St. and Independence Ave., The Bronx (718-549-3200). No admission charge. ●●

Train Stations—Tiny trains chug along teensy tracks at several locations: "The Station at Citicorp Center," in the **CITICORP CENTER ATRIUM**, is open for visitors to gape, free of charge, through 1/2/99. Alongside waterfalls and buildings fashioned from natural materials, trains make their way through a fantasy landscape at **NEW YORK BOTANICAL GARDEN**'s "Holiday Train Show," 200th St. and Kazimiroff Blvd., the Bronx. Grounds admission is free all day Wed. and on Sat. from 10 to noon. For further information, call 718-817-8700. New this year, **BROOKLYN BOTANIC GARDEN**'s "Festival of Trains and Lights" is smaller than the other two, with a Manhattan skyline and, of course, a pint-size Brooklyn Bridge. Open through 1/10 from 10 to 4. Closed Mondays, Christmas, and New Year's Day. Weekends only, admission is charged: $3, $1.50 for students and seniors, 50 cents for children.●

Marita and Her Heart's Desire—A "chamber-music fairy tale" written by education director Bruce Adolphe is the first of **THE CHAMBER MUSIC SOCIETY OF LINCOLN CENTER**'s four concerts for families. In this narrated story, Marita makes a quest to the moon. 12/13 at 2. Alice Tully Hall (875-5776); $12. ●

Larger Than Life—An entourage of tigers, stilt-walkers, apes, and brass instruments—some real and some *faux*—performs in the legendary Bread and Puppet Circus. 12/12 through 12/20 at **THEATER FOR THE NEW CITY**, 155 First Ave. (254-1109).

Matinees in Miniature—A live actor looks suitably enormous next to the marionettes in *Gulliver's Travels,* the production with which **THE SWEDISH COTTAGE MARIONETTE THEATER** reopened after an extensive restoration that has carried the building above even its former glory. Shows are twice daily except Mondays. Enter Central Park at 81st St. and Central Park West to reach the cottage at 79th St. and the West Drive (988-9093). Tickets are $5, $4 for children. Reservations are required. **PAPAGENO PUPPET THEATER**'s Susan Delery Whedon uses rod puppets and her own abundant talent as a lyric soprano to stage *Cinderella*—with the Prokofiev ballet score (at noon)—and *Peter and the Wolf* (at 1:30). Fri., Sat., and Sun. through 12/20. 462 Columbus Ave., near 82nd St. (874-3297); $5. Reservations required.

Golden Goose—London's Young Vic Theatre Company presents the earliest—limb-lopping and grandma-gulping—versions of *Grimm Tales*. Recommended for children ages 6 and up. Through 1/3/99. **NEW VICTORY THEATER**, 209 W. 42nd St. (239-6200); $10–$25.

Big Little Top—In **BIG APPLE CIRCUS**'s show *Happy On!,* ringmaster Norman Barrett ushers in a delightfully absurd budgerigar act. The circus tent is pitched at Damrosch Park at Lincoln Center (307-4100) through 1/10. Tickets are $12–$58.

Holiday Extravaganzas—A Norwegian reindeer makes cameo appearances in the ever-popular **RADIO CITY MUSIC HALL** "Christmas Spectacular." Through 1/3/99. Sixth Ave. at 50th St. (247-4777 for information; 307-1000 for tickets); $27–$72. Kenny Rogers appears in a new musical called *Christmas From the Heart.* **BEACON THEATER**, Broadway at 74th St. (307-7171), through 1/3/99; $19–$69. Roger Daltry stars as Ebenezer Scrooge in a megamusical adaptation of Charles Dickens's *A Christmas Carol.* Through 12/27. **MADISON SQUARE GARDEN**, 2 Pennsylvania Plaza (307-7171); $19–$58.

Ground Rules:

● = free

● = now or never (one-shot deal or final week)

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Arriving with a dollhouse that's a replica of her house under his arm, Clara's eccentric Uncle Drosselmeyer asks youngsters in the audience to join him at the Stahlbaum's holiday bash—at New York Theatre Ballet's intimate, child-centric hour-long production of *The Nutcracker.*

Photograph by Tom Keller.

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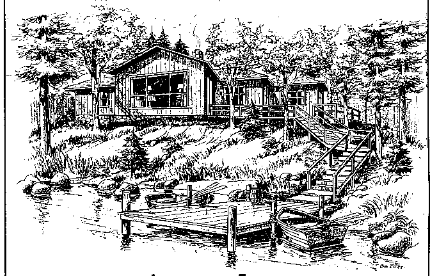

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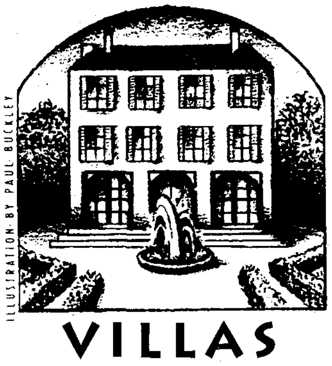

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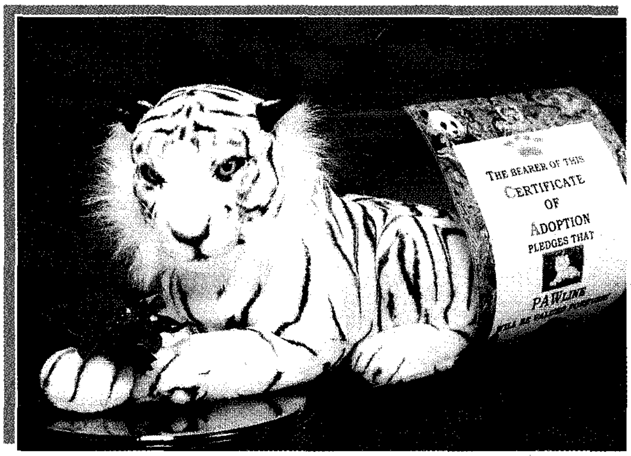

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STRICTLY PERSONALS
New York Magazine, Box # ______
P.O. Box 4600
New York, New York 10163-4600

I've Been Called A Snob—Because I enjoy the best of food, wine and Manhattan living. This tall, blond, clean-cut, successful Wall Streeter, 38, seeks a lady of the highest quality. We enjoy working out, movies, dancing, Sunday brunch and the arts. Great legs are a plus. Please send note/photo to JWT60@aol.com or 6416 ✉ ☎

Effervescence And Style—Warm, pretty *academic with eclectic interests*, 5'7", seeks successful, smart man, 48-62, for smiles and romance. 6380 ✉

Soft, Gentle—Affectionate, fit, passionate Manhattan woman, MD, 50s, seeks active, pro-Israeli, 60ish Jewish man. 6405 ✉

Hopelessly Romantic Indian—Investment banker, 47, 5'10", 178, MBA (Ivy), very successful, considerate, warm, kind, intelligent, sophisticated, handsome, athletic, seeking attractive, charming lady in her 30s who enjoys the finer things in life. Any race/religion. 6391 ✉☎

You're Probably Wondering—Where I've been: a lovely, leggy, strawberry-blond, tall (5'9"), slender, elegant Jewish woman - who is independent and secure, funny, warm and passionate, and finally ready to settle down with the right man. He's a *tall*, upbeat, funny, affectionate, successful, nonsmoking, mid 40s-late 50s guy, and he's been looking for me all his life. Note/photo appreciated. 6400 ✉ ☎

Pretty, Smart, Sweet—Sincere heart of gold. Seeks same in attractive, caring, *professional Jewish man*, 51-59. 6378 ✉

Like Kim Novack—Blond beauty seeks new boyfriend. You are tall, dark and handsome, 33-45 max, Jewish. (212) a must. Photo required for response. 6410 ✉

Herpes, Hmmm?!—Handsome professional, late 40s, believer in expedited serendipity, seeks a woman smart enough, kind enough and young enough for the *whole enchilada*. 6389 ✉ ☎

MD, 65—Seeking relationship/ballroom dance partner living in north NJ. 6414 ✉

Single, Tall Executive—Brown hair, hazel eyes, 61 years young, seeks traditional, sincere single lady, 35-45, for serious relationship. Photo/note. 6377 ✉

Full-Figured?—Caring, single white male *wants to hear from you*. 6365 ✉ ☎

I Am Uniquely Pretty—Tall, slender green-eyed brunette, successful woman... but the substance of me is to love with great passion. You are a man, late 40s-mid 50s, honest and more impressed with substance than packaging. NY/NJ. 6384 ✉☎

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I've Been Waiting—Down-to-earth Jewish MD, 43, 5'8", brown/blue, seeks intelligent, professional, nonsmoking woman to be friend/lover/partner and start a family. Note/photo appreciated. 6396 ✉

Handsome Male—44, 6', trim, financial professional, seeks attractive, intelligent, single white female, 30-37, who is honest, caring, warm, sensitive. Pluses if you enjoy concerts, shows, fine dining, travel. Note/photo, please. 6404 ✉

Down-To-Earth Katie Couric Type—Seeks her match. Pretty, 31-year-old, Christian (nonreligious) social worker with a great smile and good values, seeks attractive, nonsmoking, professional, family-orientd gentleman, about 30-40, with honesty and integrity. Note/photo, please. 6369 ✉

New Year's In Monte Carlo?—Spon*taneous, successful*, handsome business exec, 38, seeks attractive, spontaneous woman of substance, 25-35, for a New Year's party to remember. Note/photo/phone. 6392 ✉ ☎

Seeking A Special Man In Our Life—A *great-looking, emotionally and financially* secure (45) Manhattanite and her adopted baby girl are seeking a soul mate. 6363 ✉

Handsome Retired Lawyer—6', 175 lbs. Brown hair. Athletic. 73. Affectionate, gentle, analyzed. Loves humor, racquetball, theater, music, reading, scholarship, ideas, good nutrition. Nonreligious Jewish. Seeks slim, compatible woman, 5'5"-5'8". Photo/note. 6415 ✉

Oxymoronman—Divorced, NYC/LI, 50s - looks 40s, child at heart, needs long-term sweetie. I'm 5'7", slim, cute, own curly hair, irreverent rock 'n' roller. She's unpretentious, unneurotic, cute, sexy, trim, smart, guileless - with style, warped sense of humor and a touch of larceny in her heart. Photo. 6394 ✉

Catholic Male—45 years old, looks 35, seeks conservative, religious lady who is cheerful and easygoing. 6387 ✉

Attractive, Personable—Jewish male, 57, seeks lady for friendship, dating and more. Note/photo. 6413 ✉

Back In NY After Ten-Year Escape!—Degreed, much-accomplished, handsome, interesting, boundless passion and humor, secure, 42, 5'11", seeking serious relationship with younger, highly intelligent woman. RSVP - note and photo. 6420 ✉

Just Coffee—Cute black woman, 32, Ivy-educated, deeply spiritual, dark brown, 5'5", shapely - not thin, seeks masculine male who is sincere, responsible, attractive, athletic and deep. 6373 ✉ ☎

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Spiritual Female—Age 45, Buddhist, pianist, slim and attractive. Read pages 144-147 of Going To Pieces Without Falling Apart by Mark Epstein. Answer if you practice and want this in your life. E-mail: attract1together.net or 6409✉☎

Confident, Educated, Established—Mature, successful entrepreneur. Divorced, 6'2", 180 lbs. Seeks articulate, intelligent female exhibiting good character, honesty and impeccable integrity, for storybook romance leading to marriage/family/perhaps children. No picture, just a thousand words. E-mail powerbroker@ibm.net or 6362 ✉

Call Your Mom—Handsome, divorced, playful, successful, affectionate, 45-year-old Jewish CEO (too busy for bars, etc.), seeks attractive, caring, warm, loving, shapely, fun, 32-38-year-old for long-term relationship. Kids okay. Must love to travel and be mentally and physically active. Photo and letter. 6382 ✉

Extremely Warm, Attractive—Sensitive, professional Jewish woman, 44, with a good sense of humor and wide range of *interests, wishes to meet a sincere and* decent man. Please send a brief note/phone number. Photo appreciated. 6428 ✉

Vibrant, Attractive Brunette—Warm heart, wise soul, passionate spirit, fit, active, bright professional, eager to share *diverse interests with fun-loving, good* man - open to life and to love. Prefer Jewish nonsmoker, 55 plus. 6412 ✉ ☎

Ready For A Nice Guy—Female, 34, 5'4", attractive, slim, independent, PhD, good sense of humor, caring, fun - enjoys travel, dining, sports, adventure, romance and more. Looking to balance work with a best friend and partner for life. Seeks bright, stable, professional, fun, fit male, 34-44, with good sense of humor and similar interests, who is down-to-earth, not afraid to commit, and interested in starting a family. Photo and note. 6360 ✉

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MARY ANN MADDEN #928

NEW YORK MAGAZINE COMPETITION

The title "Leaving Las Vegas" was translated into Cantonese as "I'm Drunk and You're a Prostitute." "Field of Dreams" became "Imaginary Dead Baseball Players Live in My Cornfield," and "Interview With the Vampire" became "So, You Are a Lawyer."

—reported by James Sterngold in the New York *Times.*

Above, actual re-translations of foreign titles for American films. Competitors are invited to invent one such—brief, hapless, moving.

Results of Competition 925, in which you were asked for a sample of Good News/Bad News or Bad News/Good News.

Report: You're right. Ours were murky and indecipherable instructions. Sorry. You did well to determine what in hell we wanted. Many of you sent one of each—we accept either with humility. Baseball and elections—topical when printed, old when read. But who are we, after all? As our aunt remarked when her dog lifted a leg at a sidewalk art display: "Beau, we have come to admire, not to criticize." Thanks all, you're a forbearing lot. Or is that furbearing . . .

First Prizes of two-year subscriptions to *New York* to:

"My lady, allow me to introduce the new gamekeeper, Mellors . . ."
". . . and his companion, Bruce."
Bill Harriman, Niantic, Conn.

"Mr. Steinbrenner is going to sell the team."
"Mr. Steinbrenner is going to sell the team to Mrs. Schott."
A. Shulman, Sarasota, Fla.

"My opponent is twenty points behind in the polls."
"My opponent is a putzhead."
Chris Doyle, Burke, Va.

Runner-up Prizes of one-year subscriptions to *New York* to:

"You have twenty."
"Hit me."
David I. Warren, Chagrin Falls, Ohio

"Congratulations. You have won the bonus supermarket sweepstakes."
"Ted, help her load the ten boxes of Spam into her car."
Selma Ellis, Glenview, Ill.

"Darn, I can't find my John Tesh CD."
"Here it is."
Sheldon Leader, Narbeth, Pa.

And Honorable Mention to:

"I hear your film was selected as one of the 50 worst movies of the year?"
"Naw, it only got an Honorable Mention."
John Blumenthal, Rye, N.Y.

"If you swim any more laps, Richard, you'll sleep through Hannah's recital tonight."
"Right."
Thomas Moloney, West Milford, N.J.

"Tonight's regularly scheduled *Jerry Springer Show* has been preempted . . ."
". . . for this special report on the O. J. Simpson custody battle."
Karen Bracey, Burke, Va.
sp. ment.: Saul Kahan, Los Angeles, Calif.

"I broke my ankle playing golf yesterday."
"But I had a great round—78."
Craig Wolfson, Spring Valley, N.Y.

"Clarisse, I fear commitment."
"I know Stuart, but at least there's an extensive library at Attica."
Cindee Leo, N.Y.C.

"I'm ready for commitment. I want to marry you, Denise."
"Then I guess this is as good a time as any to tell you that my real name is Dennis."
David Rozenson, Newton, Mass.

"Hooray—I finally fit into a size 12."
"You're reading the label upside down."
Barbara Golub, Jericho, N.Y.

"I'm king of the World."
"Also the Telegram and the Sun."
Mark S. Greenberg, Bronx, N.Y.

"I look like a tub of lard in this dress."
"It's you, Madame."
Fran Manne, Mahwah, N.J.

"The fish are biting!"
"Piranha will do that."
Mike Olton, Long Beach, Calif.

"Congratulations on the birth of your baby, Rosemary."
"Wait . . . what's this?"
Michele Davis, New Canaan, Conn.

"I have a red pencil box."
"I don't have a pencil."
Hank Volker, Boca Raton, Fla.

"All the world's a stage."
"SRO"
C. Olds, Freeport, Me.

"Senator D'Amato will spend no more time in Washington."
"Senator D'Amato will spend more time in New York."
Bill Dwyer, Rochester, N.Y.

"Will you tell him that Ed McMahon will call back?"
"No, not that Ed McMahon. I'm with the IRS."
John Foshee, Austin, Tex.

"Mr. Mayor, we're projecting a $30 million shortfall."
"Meet Garth Drabinsky."
Larry Laiken, N.Y.C.

"That was no woman, that was a hermaphrodite."
"Well . . . he sure can cut a rug!"
Mark Paladini, Sherman Oaks, Calif.

"Mom . . . John and I eloped."
"Dad . . . John and I eloped."
Philip Davis, New Canaan, Conn.

"Disney is releasing another animated literary classic."
"Donny Osmond is the voice of Gregor Samsa."
Jeff Brawer, Brookline, Mass.

"Meet Joe Black."
"No thanks. I'm already seeing someone."
Barry S. Gillman, East Brunswick, N.J.

"Your book is being made into a movie!"
"Demi Moore has the lead."
Elaine Stallworth, New Port Richey, Fla.

"Your aunt left her entire estate to you."
"I hope you're not allergic to cats."
Jean Sorensen, Herndon, Va.

"Your test results came back negative . . ."
". . . your SATs."
Paul Kocak, Syracuse, N.Y.

"Your job isn't being eliminated."
"But you are."
J. Bickart, N.Y.C.

"Scott Brosius and David Cone are staying with the Yankees."
"So is George Steinbrenner."
Anthony Gray, Closter, N.J.

"Bobby Bonilla will be back with the Mets next season!"
"Bobby Bonilla will be back with the Mets next season!"
Al Hattal, Marina del Rey, Calif.

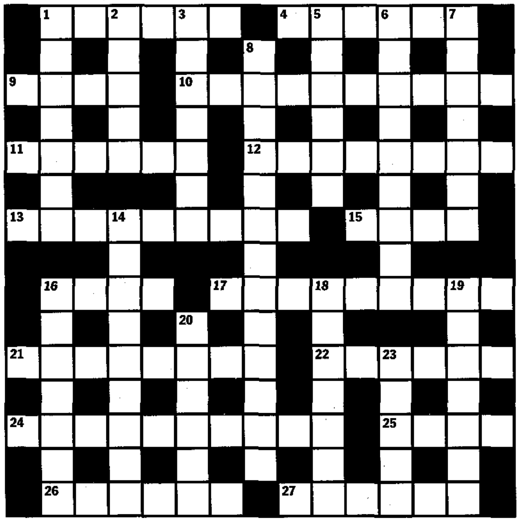
"You've just won Competition No. 925!"
"You have to read *New York* Magazine for two more years."
Louis Phillips, N.Y.C.

Rules: Postcards, please, typed if possible. **ONE ENTRY ONLY** to Competition Number 928, *New York* Magazine, 444 Madison Ave., New York, NY 10022-6999. E-mail to 104700.2563@compuserve.com, **WITH STREET ADDRESS.** Entries must be received by December 18. Editor's decisions are final, and all entries become property of *New York.* Results and winners' names will appear in the January 18 issue.

The 'Guardian' Crossword

ACROSS

1 Regular girl student. (6)
4 Educational measure? (6)
9 Turns up with a mother cat. (4)
10 It helps the dough spread farther. (7,3)
11 Irregular forces decoration. (6)
12 Jack Sprat's catch? (8)
13 The height of architectural draughtmanship. (9)
15 Reader's request for original work. (4)
16 It is fitting amidst extremes of penury. (4)
17 Stringent restriction takes vice to a low level. (9)
21 Unearth a tomb in a Canadian province. (8)
22 Discover a doctor breaking the law. (6)
24 One who provides a luncheon voucher. (4,6)
25 Female soldiers after company. (4)
26 Not off upon a visit, but ready to make one. (2,4)
27 What the champagne did when little Florence got married? (6)



DOWN

1 Not involved in fight, so not charged. (7)
2 Gathers in spare parts. (5)
3 Publicise wine where it's duty free. (7)
5 Show EEC arrangements about French wine. (6)
6 Expressed sorrow about abstainer caught in cupidity. (9)
7 It's obvious I've turned up to make an impression. (7)
8 International shipping lines. (8,5)
14 Acidly critical? (9)
16 Fix old boy up with dummy pill. (7)
18 Master takes female over fifty, in marriage. (7)
19 He's angry about the ref being wrong. (7)
20 John, half-gone on the bottle, is jolly. (6)
23 Tropical bird with head of myna and a cry of a rook. (5)

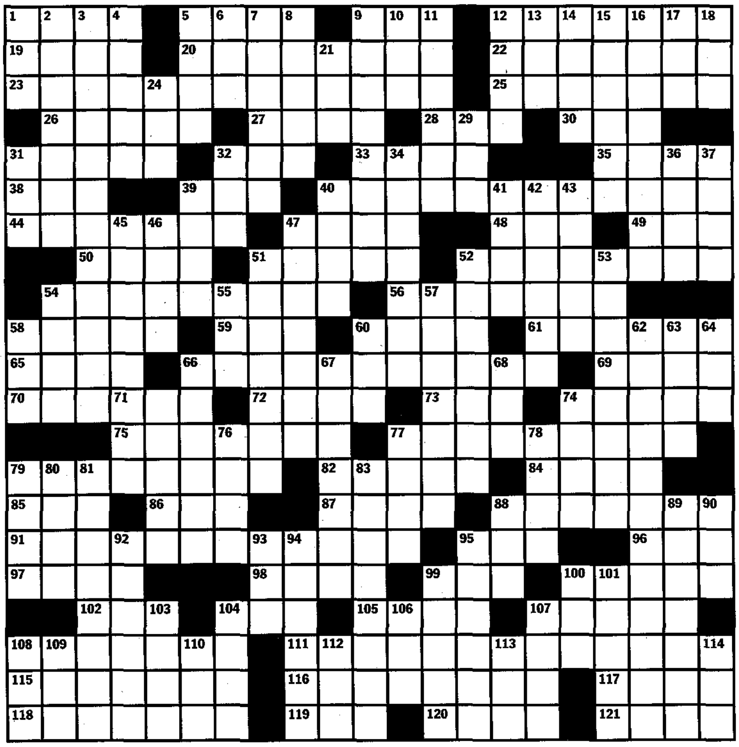
'Retrospective '98': 'Cue' Crossword • By Maura B. Jacobson

ACROSS

1 WW II Japanese leader
5 Altar end of a church
9 Bedpost tip
12 Fish of the flounder family
19 Former Norwegian king
20 Two-story apartments
22 Vulcanized rubber
23 Grammy-winning album, '98
25 Tony-winning revival, '98
26 Early sci-fi writer
27 Part of S.W.A.K.
28 Acorn's parent
30 Fort near Monterey
31 Boxers' weapons
32 Hideaway
33 Junior city
35 Chocolate-syrup brand
38 Sport, for short
39 Tax agcy.
40 Man in the news, '98
44 Rhetoric
47 Partner of dong
48 A Fleming
49 Equal score
50 Small plateau
51 —— voce
52 Disconnects
54 Kentucky Derby horse of '98
56 Quiescent state
58 Skin: prefix
59 Brown of the Big Bands
60 Author unknown: abbr.
61 Malnourished
65 Esau's land
66 Hero of '98
69 "La Douce"
70 Rainier's realm
72 Civil disorder
73 Farm stack
74 Encore
75 Clan plaids
77 Emmy and Oscar winner, '98
79 Umpires' colleagues
82 Goes sky-high
84 Make watertight
85 G. & S. princess
86 Hostelry
87 —— dixit (unproven assertion)
88 Hot sauce
91 Olympics gold medalist, '98
95 Helping of corn
96 Stevedores' union abbr.
97 Stern's opposite
98 Pop singer Vikki
99 Nightwear, familiarly
100 Like —— (probably)
102 "—— Kapital"
104 Have a late meal
105 Forward a country, backward a lake
107 Here's Howe
108 Super Bowl winners, '98
111 U.S. Open champ, '98
115 Carpenter's residue
116 International policy agreements
117 The Bee Gees, e.g.
118 Relatives on the father's side
119 Scandinavian rug
120 Bakery buy
121 Desert abundance

DOWN

1 Tyke
2 Leigh's husband, once
3 Oscar-winning director, '98
4 Open to view
5 Together, in music
6 "—— a lid on it!"
7 Wheel radii
8 Pixieish
9 Having being
10 Calligraphy need
11 "The Moon ——," 1942 Steinbeck novel
12 Hell, euphemistically
13 "The —— Daba Honeymoon"
14 Claude Akins sheriff role
15 Overly routinized
16 Kind of garden basin
17 Southwestern tribesman
18 Hanoi holiday
21 Letters on an ambulance
24 Light-switch settings
29 Scottish single
31 To and ——
32 Thirsty
34 In progress
36 Forward a lake, backward a country
37 —— bien
39 Trouble spot, '98
40 "Catwoman" Eartha
41 Wedding-cake feature
42 Panama lady of a Cole Porter musical
43 Escargot
45 Co-player
46 Home of 19-Across
47 Glove leather
51 California mountains
52 Disavowals
53 Notorious Roman emperor
54 Fix over
55 Ending for form or spat
57 Not in any place
58 Rep.'s opponent
60 Behave
62 Name on the obit list, '98
63 Give off
64 Steely ——, rock group
66 Actress Rita
67 Less like a rolling stone
68 Highball ingredient
71 Antilles Indian
74 Moby Dick's pursuer
76 Change for a twenty
77 Kin of hath
78 South of Va.
79 Van Winkle and Torn
80 Do film-cutting
81 Overcome eye to eye
83 Romberg musical form
88 Two of these make a good-bye
89 Approach to block escape
90 Cereal bit
92 Blake of "Gunsmoke"
93 Fort Worth coll.
94 Ice T, for one
95 Matter thrown out
99 Publish
100 Between pie and mode
101 Uses a flour sieve
103 Stumpy tail
104 Trans-Atl. expresses
106 Rage
107 Word with "while"
108 Juvenile org.
109 Tattered remnant
110 Malt suffix
112 —— port in a storm
113 Before plop or plunk
114 Reel's go-with



Solutions to last week's puzzles appear on page 81.

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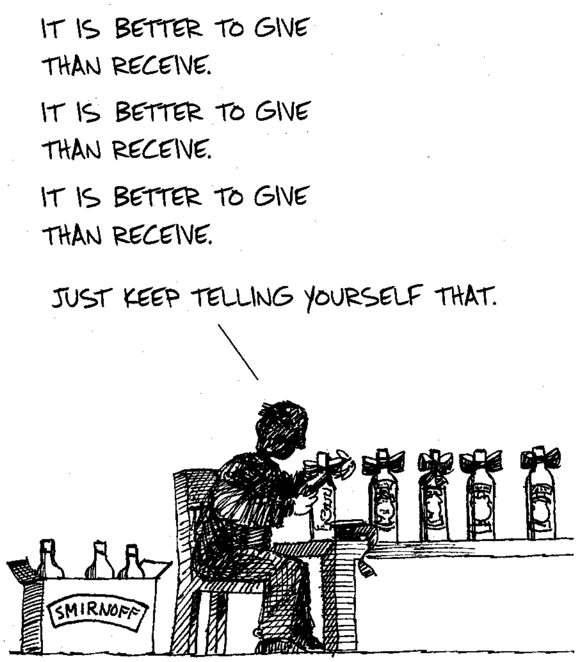
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